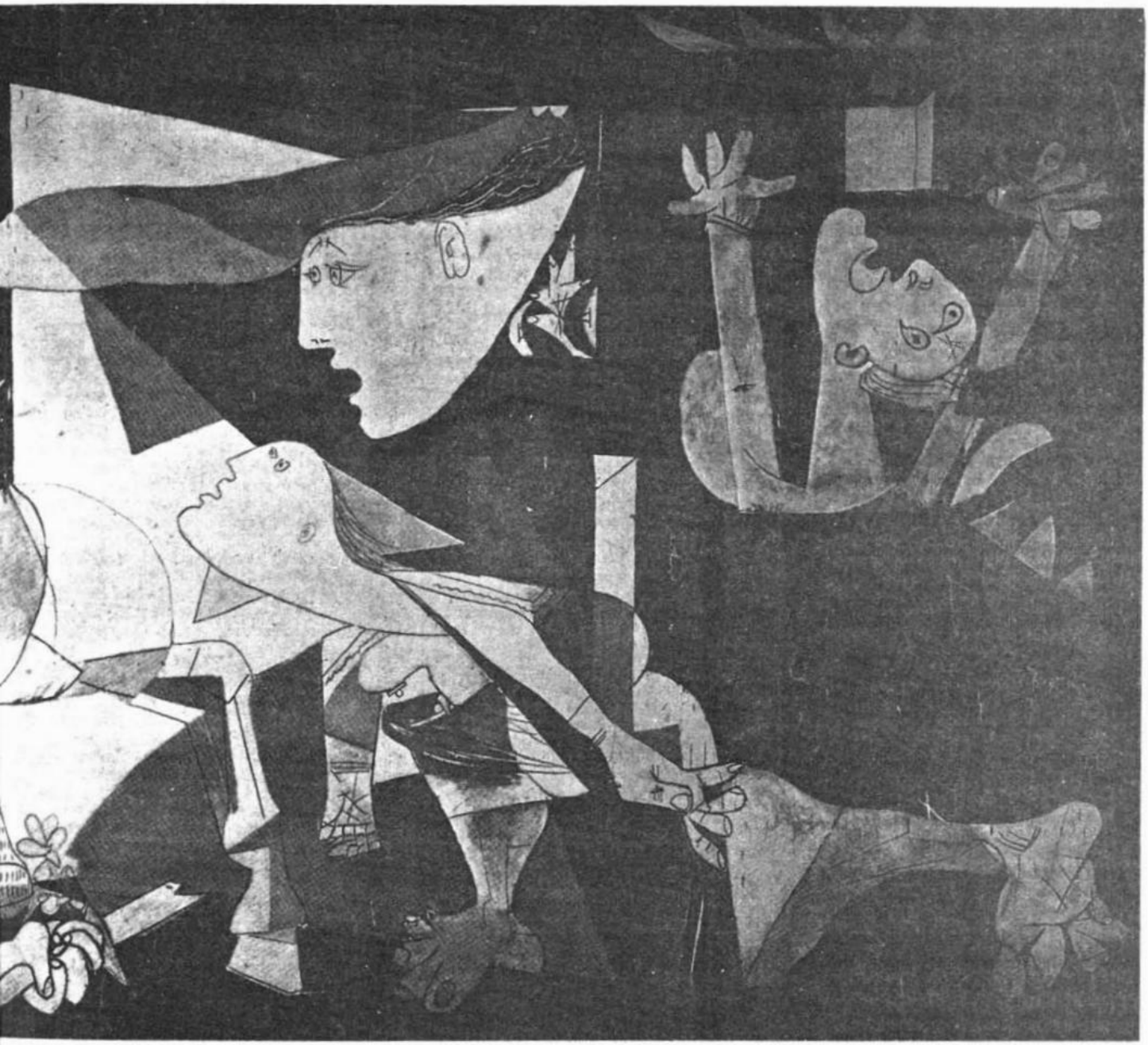
the satanic force

EBOOK

VOLUME 1

PART 2



THE HINDU

IPKF toll touches 214, LTTE's put at 753

BATTLE □ FOR □ JAFFNA

From K. K. Katyal

NEW DELHI, Oct. 30.

A total of 214 members of the Indian Peace Keeping-Force (IPKF) have been killed and 709 wounded in the operations in Sri Lanka so far. Those killed included 15 officers and 14 Junior Commissioned Officers.

An official spokesman said today that the officers who had insisted on being in the forefront to minimise civilian casualties were leading their units. A large number of jawans, who had received minor injuries, have rejoined duty.

The number of the LTTE cadres killed in the fighting have been estimated at 753, however the number of injured persons was not given.

The spokesman referred to a newspaper report that the LTTE regarded the IPKF prisoners as hostages and said:"It is clarified that the IPKF personnel cannot be hostages with the LTTE and should not be subjected to coercion".

Disinformation: According to intelligence sources, LTTE leaders have instructed their cadres and sympathisers abroad to launch a disinformation campaign to accuse the Indian troops of killing civilians and committing atrocities and claim that the supplies of arms and ammunition to the LTTE would not be allowed to dry up. They were also told to send communications, indicting the IPKF, to the Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, and Amnesty International and propaganda material to Tamil Nadu.

The IPKF which, according to official information received here, was continuously patrolling the Jaffna peninsula, has established link patrols to prevent the LTTE from laying mines on the roads. A big arms and explosives dump was recovered yesterday in Jaffna in an area between the bus stand and civil hospital.

Arms recovered: The arms recovered included one 120mm mortar, a three-inch mortar and large quantities of other ammunition. A large cache of arms was also captured in Batticaloa on Wednesday. It contained 11 rifles and a big quantity of ammunition. Mr. Balasubramaniam, a hard-core LTTE militant leader, was apprehended by the IPKF in Batticaloa.

Jaffna was gradually returning to normal with the curfew lifted yesterday for four hours. Relief measures were stepped up, and the refugees regularly provided with food and medicines. In Trincomalee, the IPKF set up a medical centre for use of the civilian population.

LTTE leader dead in strafing?

MADRAS, Oct. 30.

An External Affairs Ministry spokesman said here today that he had no information to confirm whether the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) deputy leader, Mr. Mahatiya, was killed in the Indian Peace-Keeping Force's (IPKF) aerial strafing at Chavakacheri in the Jaffna peninsula yesterday.

Answering a question from reporters, the spokesman said "All I can say is that when the 11th and 12th battalions of the Madras Regiment moved around Chavakacheri, we have information that the building which was strafed from the air, was the LTTE headquarters. I have no information to confirm that Mr. Mahatiya was killed in that operation."

He said that if relief supplies were to reach people in the Jaffna town, it was important that the IPKF should retain control of the Chavakacheri road. When two battalions of the Madras Regiment converged to secure the road, they came under very heavy fire from this particular, isolated building. A reconnaissance by them revealed that the building was the LTTE headquarters.

"We could have stormed it and then the Madras Regiment would have taken very heavy casualties. We used helicopter-gunships which came into Jaffna after the town was secured. It was directed against a specific target. I have no confirmed evidence whether Mr. Mahatiya was there, which was the LTTE headquarters," the spokesman added.

In Colombo, the State-owned *Daily News* had referred to intelligence reports suggesting that Mahatiya and Santosam Master, the Trincomalee leader, had been killed.

The newspaper ran the story on the front-page with the heading "Mahattaya killed?"
unhurt.—PTI, UNI

LTTE CLAIMS

AUdivil 4 arrested and later shot dead by the IPKF.

Indian army moving from Navatkuli tto Chavakacheri opened fire indiscriminately. About 100 civilians killed all along the road.

NEWS

Human chain planned to press for ending 'war'

MADRAS, Oct. 30.

The Indian Government should immediately stop "the war against Tamils" in Sri Lanka voluntarily and without any precondition to prevent further killings of innocent civilians, Mr. Sp. Veerapandian, convener, Confederation for the Protection of the Rights of Eelam Tamils, told a press conference here today. To press this demand, the confederation, formed recently by about 20 organisations of the people in the literary field, writers, students and others, planned to form a human chain from Parrys Corner to Meenambakkam here on November 2.

The participants would stand in a line holding one another's hand either on the centre of the road or along the kerb and keep chanting "Indian Government, stop the war" for an hour from 4-30 p.m. They would also have placards hung around their necks.

At 22 points, prominent personalities including leaders of political parties would provide leadership and linkages to the 16 km-long chain.

Mr. Veerapandian said Mr. K. Kalimuthu, AIADMK deputy general secretary, Mr. V. Gopalaswami, DMK MP, poets Messrs M. Metha, and Valampuri John MP, and writers Messrs Salai Ilandirayan and Perunchithiranar had agreed to take part in the programme.

DMK will join human chain: The DMK president, Mr. M. Karunanidhi, announced that his party would join the "human chain" programme.

Rajiv's new time bomb ticking in Sri Lanka

DEREK BROWN

REPORT

THERE is a certain sardonic satisfaction among the Sinhalese majority of Sri Lanka, as the body count mounts in the north.

"I think JR is being so clever," a businessman remarked. "He has the Indians doing his dirty work for him."

Like many Sinhalese, he believes that JR (the universal diminutive for President Junius Richard Jayawardene) has cunningly inveigled the Indians into smashing the Tamil Tigers, thus saving "their" country from secession or partition. When the fighting is over, runs the current wishful thinking, the Sinhalese nation will be able once more to impose their majority will.

This is self deception on a grand scale. The Indians came to Sri Lanka precisely to prevent any such thing.

After four years of savage communal warfare, Sri Lanka was, in New Delhi eyes, hopelessly unstable. Much more important, the instability could have spread to India itself, via the southern state of Tamil Nadu. The accord of July 29 was and remains designed to protect India, as much as to solve the Sri Lanka conflict.

The Colombo government has had to cut its military links with Pakistan, and other powers regarded with deep suspicion by Delhi. In addition, JR, who achieved power and retained it by appealing to crude Sinhalese chauvinism, was obliged to concede a measure of autonomy to the Tamils of the North and East. In return, India became the guarantor of Sri Lanka's sovereignty and territorial integrity' and — the big bonus for JR — Delhi accepted the awesome task of bringing the Tigers to heel.

For more than ten weeks, the Indians did all they could to make the Tamil Tigers renounce violence and go political. When the break came, they had no compunction about going for the kill. Nor have they been abashed by the ferocity of the Tiger response, or the desperate plight of the people they came to protect.

After taking close to 1,000 casualties themselves, dead and wounded, the Indians say they have forced the Tigers back to their pre-1983 role of guerrilla fighters. Shorn of their fixed defences, munitions factories, and de facto governing role, the theory goes, the militants will be abandoned by the Tamil people, who have a deep seated instinct to support the winning side. The analysis airily ignores the Tigers' continuing control of most of the countryside, and the fact that their leadership remains intact and fanatically intent on continuing the fight.

However, troops are pouring into Sri Lanka almost every day. There are certainly 20,000 here now, and possibly 30,000. The Indian navy is patrolling the Palk straits. In Tamil Nadu, the Tiger bases have been closed and supply lines cut. The odds must be heavily on India being able to contain, if not snuff out, the rebel resistance.

But that is only phase one of their strategy. Having committed so much blood and money to the military campaign, the Indians are certainly not going to hand over the fruits of victory to the government in Colombo. They came to Sri Lanka, they say, to sort out not just the Tamil militants, but, if necessary, the Sinhalese ones as well.

To that end, India is about to embark on one of the biggest population resettlements of modern times. More than 200,000 Tamil refugees — 130,000 in India, and another 90,000 in Sri Lanka — are to be sent back to their homes, mostly in eastern province.

This will transform the demographic balance there, now more or less evenly divided between Tamils, Sinhalese, and Muslims. It will, almost certainly, mean confrontation with the Sinhalese "colonists" who have been pushing into the east, especially round the port of Trincomalee which links the exclusively Tamil north with the ethnically mixed east.

Indian officials are extraordinarily blunt about their aims, and their determination. There will be self government for the united north and east provinces, they say. There will be full resettlement of the Tamil refugees. If the Sri Lankans intervene, they will be met with force.

This has literally explosive implications for the south, which is the generic term for all the country outside the Tamil areas. An armed campaign by the JVP (Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna, or People's Liberation Front), a notionally leftist group of ardent Sinhalese chauvinists, is picking up momentum.

There is as yet, no evidence that the JVP is ready to repeat its uprising of 1971, which was put down with savage reprisals (and Indian help) and the loss of around 15,000 lives. But the warning bells are clamouring.

There is turmoil in the universities, most of which have been closed for most of the year. Seventeen members and officials of the ruling United National Party were murdered in the four weeks to mid-October. The Sri Lankan army, and the notorious special task force of paramilitary police, have been widely deployed in the south.

The great mass of the Sinhalese people, just like the Tamils, are no doubt heartily sick of violence and economic disruption. But on both sides there are deep atavistic fears. Even the mildest Sinhalese say, with all seriousness, that they are the rightful Aryan inhabitants of the island, who risk being pushed into the sea by Dravidian hordes from India.

On July 29, when Rajiv Gandhi came to Colombo, it seemed to many that the 2,000 year old nightmare was coming to life. The war in the north has since assuaged the fear. But the relief could be temporary. When Indian intentions in the east become more plain, all the ancient Sinhalese prejudice will be revived. It could turn the Tamil Tigers, in their eyes, from the prime villains into Sri Lankan resistance heroes.

October 29 1987

THE WONDERFUL HALF-HAND OF THE IPKF

LETTER *By Appan, Jaffna*

According to a Sri Lankan paper, *Lanka Guardian* of Aug.1, General Sundarji (one time Sunthararajan?) is reported to have said that the IPKF had to fight with ***"one- and-a-half hands tied behind our back."*** But in mid-May, when *India Today* asked him, "In Operation Pawan, shouldn't you have asked for more time to go in, as Maneckshaw did in 1971?", the General's reply was, ***"In 1971, you had a choice about the timing. Operation Pawan was not just a military operation, but a politico-military operation. After all, the operation was military as well."***

What did this balance half-a-hand do? The half-hand dynamited the printing machines of the ***Eela Murasu and the Murasoli*** dailies on the night of Oct.9, 1987. From 10th Oct. onwards it used its heavy guns at random, and the BBC correspondent called it *"inaccurate artillery"*, though Mark Tully who was in Palaly on a *conducted tour* saw nothing untoward. Mark Tully, a Rajiv groupie, may receive another decoration from the Queen, but at what a price honest journalism? *This half-hand got Sinhalese helicopters to strafe civilians, shell their homes, it drove tanks over rail tracks and productive vegetable gardens to avoid land mines along roads. It shot innocent civilians in their homes and bunkers, erasing entire families in the process; raped maidens, middle-aged women (even pregnant), and grannies. It ordered people to rush to refugee camps and looted their houses and shops. It decimated the entire fleet of buses at the Kondavil Depot, shot into each and every computer at the Jaffna University, imposed a non-stop curfew ranging from 15 days to months. This half-hand is yet brutalising the civilians of North-Eastern Lanka. After cordon off and search, the Indian forces herded the people into centres for "spotting" by their Tamil mercenaries. The people had to squat for hours in the hot sun. Recently at Kopay, while the oppressors had 'Fanta', a bucket of water brought for the civilians was snatched and poured out. Said the Indian sentry, "You people like to fast, now come along, fast." Can Gen.Sundarji deny all the above? Will the Indians allow independent organisations like the International Red Cross to comment on the above? North-Eastern Sri Lanka has been thrown down flat, and is being trampled by the Indians*

Indian Army chief Mr. Sundarji said the peace-keeping mission in Sri Lanka was under taken by Indian army in the interest of India and to make sure that the Tamil population in Sri Lanka got what was legitimate due to it.

According to *Aside*, the Magazine of Madras, dated Sept.16-30, 1988, a high official of the Government of India, who had worked closely with Rajiv till recently, had said in a private conversation, **"Rajiv Gandhi is a *Bhasmaasura*. Anything he touches, he destroys; and now he is touching his own head."** Probably true; because the wailings of our dying babies, children, boys and girls, men and women and grandpas and grannies have to be answered in the name of the beloved GOD above!

"Elai Alutha Kanneer Kooriya Vaalokkum"

THE AGE

87 October

Peace accord ended lives and hopes

REPORT

By CAMERON FORBES,
Colombo

Thileeban is to Eelam what Bobby Sands is to Ireland.
— slogan on wall in Jaffna.

RAJASINGHAM NARENDRAN recognised his mother by the gold earring and the blouse she wore. Dogs had eaten most of her body. He recognised his brother's build. Maggots had eaten his face.

Dr Narendran later said to an Indian Peacekeeping Force officer: "When Mrs Gandhi died, she was given a State funeral; my mother was eaten by dogs. She deserved better than that."

Mrs Florence Rajasingham, who was 65, and Rajasingham Manoharan, 38, were killed on the porch of Dr Narendran's house, in the village of Navatkuli, deep in Tamil country about 10 kilometres south of the ancient, bloodied city of Jaffna. Their 65-year-old gardener, Rasaiyah died near the house. Animals had picked his bones.

Seven days later, after receiving news of the deaths and flying from King Faisal University in Saudi Arabia where he is an assistant professor in the agricultural college, Dr Narendran would find them where they fell, cremate them, disinfect the area, then remove the remains of the breakfast they had been eating and the fish his mother had been preparing for lunch. He would lock the house and, next day, search outside the fence, finding three bullet casings, marked OPV86 7.62m80.

Who killed Florence Rajasingham, Rajasingham Manoharan and Rasaiyah? "Very, very likely, it was the IPKF," Dr Narendran says. "The casings have been identified as from a self-loading rifle. The Indian Army uses them. So do the Sri Lankan police, but they were not in the area." Besides, there was one survivor of the slaughter, a 10-year-old servant boy. Dr Narendran will not give his name or whereabouts.

He told of the brother, wary after years of terror and brutality, on hearing three shots, suggesting that the mother go out. Women were less likely to be harmed. The mother was murdered. The brother came out, hands in the prayer position, begging for mercy. He died. The men in uniform, the boy said, spoke a strange language which was not Tamil or Sinhalese.

Perhaps the killers were from the IPKF. Perhaps they were not. Truth dies a hard death in conflicts like the one in Sri Lanka. But the certainty is that, ultimately, the three were victims of chauvinism, atavistic fear and distrust.

During the past four years more than 6000 people — majority Sinhalese and minority Tamils and Muslims — have died. The three, and uncounted hundreds more, have died over the weeks since the signing of a document titled "Indo-Sri Lankan Agreement to Establish Peace and Normalcy in Sri Lanka".

This accord was probably the last, best hope of creating conditions to enable the three million Tamils and the 12 million Sinhalese to end the violence and to share, peacefully, their beautiful island.

But an Indian intellectual I spoke to, who surveyed the old Sri Lankan tragedy and the new danger to his country, now at least ankle-deep in a quagmire, said: "There is no will here, only desire. There is no history, only myths and dreams."

There are, of course, the realities of discrimination and death. But that slogan on the wall in Jaffna — "Thileeban is to Eelam what Bobby Sands is to Ireland" — points to the potency of religion, bigotry, an angry sense of history and of martyrdom.

Bobby Sands was an IRA hunger-striker; Thileeban was a Tiger, a member of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, who starved himself to death. The hard men of the IRA recall the Battle of the Boyne, 400 or so years past, as if it were yesterday; the Tigers look back to an ancient Tamil kingdom.

The Catholic IRA regard themselves as the protectors of the Catholic Northern Irish; the Tigers have appointed themselves champions of the Hindu Tamils. The IRA wants British troops out and an end to Protestant hegemony; the Tigers want Indian troops to go home, Sri Lankan troops to stay away and the creation of a separate Tamil state — Eelam — in the north and east of Sri Lanka.

The chances of peaceful coexistence between Tamil and Sinhalese faded fast after independence with real or perceived discrimination by the majority. In 1978 the leader of the Tamil United Liberation Front spoke in a parliamentary debate of the separateness of the communities since independence: "... the only change that has been brought about in the name of freedom is that one nation, the majority nation, has been enthroned in the seat of power and the minority nation made a subject nation."

The fears and the separateness spawned escalating violence. The Tigers emerged as the dominant Tamil militants and built their stronghold in Jaffna. Earlier this year, after atrocities against Sinhalese, the Sri Lankans attempted to storm the stronghold and crush the Tamils. But a military victory was out of reach and India intervened, air-dropping supplies to the Tamil civilians. And so President Jayewardene took a great gamble, signing the accord with India's Prime Minister, Mr Gandhi.

The accord, "recognising that each ethnic group has a distinct cultural and linguistic identity which must be carefully nurtured", allowed for the formation of the northern and eastern provinces into one administrative unit. For the Tamils there was to be a devolution of powers. For the Sri Lankan Government, the neutralising of the Tigers, required to lay down their arms within 72 hours, and the cutting off of their support from Tamil Nadu. For the Indians, a domestic and foreign policy victory. They would be seen to champion the Tamils and they would demonstrate their hegemony as a regional power.

President Jayewardene said in July: "We will sign the accord on Wednesday and terrorism will end by Monday." The fact that he was disastrously wrong is partly explained by his accompanying statement that the merger between north and east was a temporary one that would be dissolved by a referendum called for in the accord.

The Tigers — and many Tamils — regard the two regions as rightfully joined. They say the Sinhalese "colonised" the east and drove Tamils out, leaving them the largest group, but not a majority.

Now it is India that has sought a military solution. The IPKF had to march on Jaffna when the Tigers, having savaged their Tamil opposition militants, went into a frenzy after the suicides, turning on Sinhalese.

A grieving Dr Narendran says that after the accord "a diabolic plot" was hatched to destroy the Tigers, tempting and pressuring them into actions that would force India's hand. The leadership, under Velupillai Prabhakaran, blundered he says, and fell into a trap.

Prabhakaran and perhaps 1200 armed Tigers escaped from the physical trap of Jaffna easily enough. The question is whether they have forfeited the respect and backing of the civilians of Jaffna, caught in the middle as civilians always are in such campaigns.

"We confidently look forward to your continued support as our freedom fighters give their lives to defend the self-respect of our people and win our freedom," the Tiger political committee said. "Your continued support is a rock that can never be shattered and no force on earth can crush us."

Clearly the Indians hope that time and a rehabilitation effort will dim memories of the horror of the drive on Jaffna, slowly chipping away at support.

They recognise the difficulty of crushing the Tigers and the dangers of being caught up in a South Asian version of Vietnam, the war Arthur Calwell called dirty and unwinnable. (A military analyst told me this week he was sure that the Tigers were well tapped into the international arms trade and that the loss of the Tamil Nadu conduit would not be a problem.)

What is also in question is whether the Sinhalese have the will to devolve enough powers and responsiblities to the Tamil regions to make the people feel secure.

For much of his life 41-year-old Dr Narendran has lived with insecurity. In 1977 he fled his looted and burning house in Kandy, escaping a Sinhalese mob with only the clothes he wore. The next year he left Sri Lanka. He had planned to come back and set up a dairy farm with his brother. "And I will return still, he says, when I can live in peace." It promises to be a long exile.

RAJIV "ACCORD" GANDHI

COMMENT

Booby - trapped in Sri Lanka

Dipankar Bhattacharya

SUCH are the hazards of waging peace" - that was President R. Venkataraman commenting on the attempted assault on Rajiv Gandhi by a Sri Lankan Naval rating following the celebrated Rajiv-Jayawardene accord. Perhaps little inkling did then he have about the hazards that were to follow a bare 60 days later as waging peace degenerated into waging war, pure and simple. Yes, in the name of consolidating the peace process the one-division strong Indian armed forces in Sri Lanka have just been pushed into a meaningless battle with the Tamil Tigers - termed their "most malignant military misadventure in memory" by a scribe - costing both sides hundreds of lives while the wily Jayewardene and his hawkish cohorts are chuckling away to glory. They have good reasons to do so, for with New Delhi battling it out with the LTTE, Colombo has now really begun to taste the historic diplomatic victory that it had pulled off on July 29.

Events have indeed come a full circle in Sri Lanka. If between July 1983 - when Sri Lanka became a virtual staughterhouse for the island's longsuffering Tamil population - and July 1987, when in a dramatic development Jayewardene and Rajiv Gandhi put their pens together to manufacture that magic of an accord, New Delhi always appeared to be arguing the Tamil case with Colombo, now the broad majority of Sri Lankan Tamils find rajiv Gandhi acting in tandem with JRJ in crushing all their legitimate aspirations. The LTTE which owes much of its present military muscleto earlier Indian assistance now faces the strongest threat so far to its physical existence from the very Indian friends. And ironically enough the unprecedented slaughter of the Tamil Tigers by the "Indian Peace Killing Force" continued even as Rajiv Gandhi was crying himself hoarse at the Vancouver summit of C'wealthh nations about the safety and security of the ethnic Indian majority in Fiji, a sizable section of which comprises none other than Tamils.

Behind the Flare-up...

THAT the implementation of the Rajiv-JRJ accord would not be a smooth affair - fraught as it was with hundreds of ifs and buts - was known from the very beginning, more so to the two assenting parties. Yet instead of making a serious and concerted effort to thrash out the remaining irritants through necessary political and diplomatic follow-up, the Rajiv government deliberately chose to ignore all early warnings. And thus while in India Rajiv Gandhi was busy explaining the "historic significance" of the accord before one and all, in Sri Lanka whatever little uphoria was generated particularly among sections of Tamils was fast petering out as the implementation of the accord began to falter right from the word go. Indian armed forces were quite punctual in their arrival, but the time-frame-work for surrender of arms that was to have taken place within 72 hours of signing the accord had to be extended by another four days. Tamil militants accused Colombo of making unnecessary delay in effecting the promised general amnesty to their comrades and of promoting fresh Sinhala settlements in the East. On their part the militants made a rather symbolic surrender of their arms and the IPKF was flayed in the Sinhala press for inaction on this score. And among themselves the various militant groups resumed their internecine war in a big way with LTTE charging the IPKF with connivance with groups ranged against it. The fast-unto-death by LTTE's chief political organiser, Amrithalingam Thileepan, 23, at the famous Nallur Kandasamy temple in Jaffna town in a bid to press the Tiger's five-point charter of demands - release of the estimated 1,500 Tamil prisoners detained under the Prevention of Terrorism Act, stoppage of Sinhala colonisation allegedly continuing in Trincomalee, Batticaloa, Amparai and Mullaitivu; stoppage of all rehabilitation work until the formation of the interim government for the North and the East; closure of all the military camps in schools and Tamil villages - and a parallel outbreak of sympathy fasts both in the North and the East in late September were symptoms enough of a marked deterioration in the situation. And the tripartite agreement among the two governments and the LTTE on 28 September on the formation of an Interim Administrative Council for the integrated Northern and Eastern provinces could do little to reverse this process. The agreement itself fell flat with the LTTE suddenly going back on its own panel, insisting on three changes in its representation of seven in the 12-men IAC and JRJ obstinately refusing to okay the proposed replacement of V. Sivagnanam as the Administrator-in-Council by N. Pathmanathan while accepting the two other changes suggested by LTTE. This virtually sealed the negotiations and whatever little scope and hope were still left became altogether taking a sharp downturn following yet another provocation by the Sri Lankan government. On October 3 the Sri Lankan Navy intercepted an LTTE boat off Point Pedro with 17 Tigers, including such top leaders as Pulendran, LTTE's Trincomalee regional commander and Kumarappa, the Jaffna regional commander, on board. Ignoring the LTTE's warning and all persuasive pleas by the IPKF, the JRJ administration went ahead with its declared plan of taking the arrested persons to colombo for the sake of interrogation. On the way the Tigers, as had already been declared by Prabhakaran in his warning message to the IPKF top brass - consumed cyanide, leading to instantaneous death for 12 of them. This was sure sign of a rapidly

approaching point of no return and with the LTTE deciding to avenge the martyrdom of their comrades by indulging in one of those macabre orgies of mass slaughter, liquidating some 150 innocent Sinhala civilians including women and children, the situation was perfectly back to square one. Yet another of those magic accords of Rajiv 'Accord' Gandhi had come violently unstuck. And for cartoonist R.K. Laxman it was yet another prediction come true.

But with a one division strong Indian army stationed in the island and an accord charging India with the task of protecting peace and tranquility the situation this time could not possibly have followed the pattern established between July 1983 and July 1987; and by October 10 with the IPKF launching a full-scale offensive against the LTTE the new dimension was in full play. and on his part Prabhakaran was quite aware of this new dimension as one can find from the following reaction of his to the July 29 accord: "We have so far had to face only the Sri Lankan army. In future we may have to face the Indian army as well". The "future" is now being enacted in all its glory detailed in the battle-scarred streets of Jaffna.

Wily Jayewardene, Foolhardy Rajiv Intransigent Prabhakaran...

THE Indian government is laying the entire blame for the present crisis in Sri Lanka at the door of the LTTE. Most of the commentaries and editorials in the print-media have also echoed this official position, holding the "intransigence" of the Tigers responsible for what are considered as "unfortunate-yet-unavoidable" developments in the island. But any analysis which puts the LTTE in the dock for the present flare-up in Sri Lanka suffers from a fundamental flaw. The so-called "peace process" in the island was sponsored jointly by Jayewardene and Rajiv Gandhi and LTTE or for that matter any Tamil group was never a party to it. Naturally the two governments must have felt that they were capable of maintaining peace whether LTTE accepted the accord or not. And though ultimately most of the Tamil groups including LTTE agreed to give the accord a try they never concealed the fact that they were doing so only because of their "love for India" or because, as Prabhakaran put it, they were left with little option when a big power like India chose to decide their destiny. Naturally, then, if peace has now degenerated into war the responsibility must be shared by those who thought they could enforce peace even without the concurrence of LTTE. The possibility of fresh flare-ups was written into the "peace forces" itself and the violent denouement could well have come through a different chain of events.

Indeed given the history of hostility between the Sri Lankan government, particularly the JRJ administration, and Tamil militants, a mere peace accord - JRJ administration, and Tamil militants, a mere peace accord - that too one by no means whole-heartedly endorsed by any significant section of the fighting Tamil groups or for that matter even by the majority of the Sinhala community - could never possibly radically alter the approaches of the contending parties. On many an earlier occasion Colombo did go back on promises made to Tamil groups and the concessions made by JRJ in the July 29 accord were therefore bound to appear suspect in Tamil eyes, more so when the accord was preceded by the bloodiest military offensive against the Tigers in the entire course of their struggle for national self-determination. In fact Jayewardene's sudden clamour for a peaceful settlement of the ethnic crisis was not prompted by any sympathetic concern for Tamil aspirations - it was only after he realised that his own forces were incapable of allowing him the luxury of a military solution that he switched over to the new gameplan of an Indo-Sri Lanka accord, shifting the entire burden of curbing and crushing Tamil militancy to India's shoulders. For a predominantly military outfit like LTTE which has borne the burnt of the Sri Lankan attack, surrendering all its arms cannot but be a highly emotive issue and demands an enormous amount of political persuasion, backed, of course, by real, concrete evidences of concessions that can be purchased at that cost. Evidently, the so-called Rajiv-Jayewardene peace process had paid little attention to this hard reality. Moreover, even if the Tamils were made a party to such a peace process that could have only meant a change in the course of their struggle for self-determination and not cessation of the struggle itself. But the Rajiv-Jayewardene doctrine of peace would not leave the slightest scope for any such a peace process that could have only meant a change in the course of their struggle itself. But the Rajiv-Jayewardene doctrine of peace would not leave the slightest scope for any such "nonsense".

If war is a continuation of peacetime politics, albeit in a different form, so is peace an extension of wartime hostility through non-military means. Surely Rajiv Gandhi has now spent enough years in politics to understand this fundamental equation between war and peace. We can therefore reasonably presume that when he was putting his signature to the July 29 accord, whereby India was charged with the most unenviable task of keeping two warring sides at peace he knew what he was doing. At least he must have been theoretically aware of the possibility that the Indian armed forces might have to apply some force in ensuring that the Tigers surrendered their arms, though it is only now that he is realising the real dimension of such an encounter between the IPKF and LTTE. But perhaps that was not the time for Rajiv Gandhi to worry about the dangerous prospect of getting bogged down in

Sri Lanka, he was badly in need of some wayout from the menacing Bofors scandal which was then threatening to rip through his crisis-ridden government. And so when Jayewardene offered to "naturalise" India's predominant role in the affairs of this part of the region Rajiv readily lapped it up. The beleagured "Bofors Prime Minister" of India acquired yet another feather of an accord to his cap. An accord that he claimed would not only bring peace in the strife-torn island and ease the military and economic burden of a protracted civil war for both the neighbours, but would also effectively check the process of growing imperialist penetration in this sensitive region by fostering co-operation between the two countries.

While Rajiv Gandhi obviously relished Jayewardene's respectful gestures, for majority of India's "foreign policy elite" this was a clear indication of the fact that India's South Asia policy had finally come of age. The potential regional power, they said, was now well on its way to emerge as the recognised "leader" of the region. Yesterday's "bullying big brother" had come to be regarded as an accommodating elder.

On Punjab Accord :

R.K. Lakshman, The Times of India

Lending Expertise To Crust Popular Unrest: "Regional Cooperation"?

INDIA'S military offensive against the LTTE on the Sri Lankan soil provides further confirmation of her changed approach. Despite all the danger of getting trapped in a Vietnam or Afghanistan-type situation in Sri Lanka Rajiv Gandhi appears determinedt to go the whole hog to buy the confidence of India's smaller and weaker neighbours. He is even quite willing to suffer some losses in the short run to ensure long-term gains in this regard. He knows the old concept of "regional hegemony" is not going to work under today's changed circumstances, it has to be turned inside out -- for today's slogan is regional cooperation. In other words, it has to be a "benevolent hegemony".

It is this doctrine of "benevolent hegemony" that Rajiv Gandhi is faithfully translating into practice in Sri Lanka to the enthusiastic applause of the Western world. And why single out the West, he has sort of won a worldwide approval, with no opposition yet from any quarter. "From the Commonwealth summit meeting at Washington DC, where the Prime Minister met President Reagan and his principal aides, India's peacekeeping role in Sri Lanka won unqualified approval and support", writes the noted foreign policy analyst Bhabani Sen Gupta in an article in 'The Hindustan Times' (October 24), adding, "This unprecedented event has been interpreted in India and South Asia as the first International recognition of India's status as the leading power in this region". Further explaining the significance of this recognition he notes, "Since the Bangladesh war of 1971, in which Indian troops vanquished the Pakistani army in the paddy fields and marshes of what was then East Pakistan, the world has tended to see India as the primary power in South Asia... There was a catch, however.

The Western world recognised India as the regional power in South Asia. But it gave India no role. In order to understand the dichotomy, one has to hit upon a precise concept of the role of an independent regional power in a bipolar world. The concept has to be crafted with three components. First, primacy of the national interests of the regional power in a geopolitical region which the external powers would not violate. Secondly, the regional power must have a determinant voice in the affairs of the region, specially in matters of serious conflict. Finally, junior members of the region will acknowledge the influence of the regional power... Now the world's temper and mood has changed and India is given the role of a regional power" (emphasis ours).

The doctrine of "benevolent hegemony" has also found enthusiastic takers among the Opposition in India, particularly within the CPI(M). These gentlemen do not find anything wrong in India's military operations in Sri Lanka. In fact, far from questioning the advisability of trying military means to salvage a politically and diplomatically moribund accord, the CPI(M) politbureau has come out with a blanket endorsement of the "Indian Peace Mission" in Sri Lanka, laying the entire blame on the LTTE's "Intransigence". After all, they seem to suggest, we have not invaded Sri Lanka, but are only sharing with her our enormous experience and expertise in an extremely high-priority area. Maybe we cannot show our smaller and weaker neighbours the road to economic development and social progress, but shouldn't we at least show them how to preserve "national unity and integrity"? After all, is this not the one area where we possess the latest technology? Why shouldn't we then transfer that and have a collaboration?

Apprehensions have, of course, been expressed that India may get embroiled in a Vietnam or Afghanisatan-type situation in Sri Lanka. But that is only to remind New Delhi that it is as yet only a regional power and not a super power, and so it cannot possibly afford to have as lasting an affair as the Americans had in Vietnam or the Soviets are still having in Afghanistan. Says Bhabani Sen Gupta, "The balance of forces still favours the peace-keeping mission. But it may not be so for a long time. Success of intervention is ensured by its quick termination: this is what made the Indian intervention in Bangladesh a text-book success story. The IPKF is now not much smaller than Sri Lanka's entire army of 24,000. The Tigers will stake everything to prolong the fighting, to get India bogged down. What is needed on the Indian side is determination to

secure the minimum objectives of the fighting in Jaffna – significant disarming of the Tigers – and quick withdrawal of the bulk of IPKF. No more than a few thousand soldiers must remain in Sri Lanka on New Year's day; the thinning out must begin in the next few weeks. This country has always opposed prolonged foreign military presence on the territory of a sovereign State..." (emphasis ours).

So, this is the latest language in whcih our foreign policy discourses are being delivered. But having once walked into the Sri Lankan imbroglio can India now walk out at her own sweet will? Even though the government of India claims to have smashed the LTTE's resistance in Jaffna after more than two weeks of fierce fighting, indications are that this dirty, little war is going to have a protracted, violent aftermath, and cause not a few convulsions in India's domestic affairs as well.

From the Frying "Bofors" Pan into the Raging Sri Lankan Fire

PROMPTED by the immediate compulsion of getting out of the Bofors scandal and the long-term consideration of scoring some more points in the regional power-game, Rajiv Gandhi had stepped up his role in Sri Lanka's ethnic crisis since early this year. After Bofors and Fairfax, Sri Lanka thus became perhaps the third biggest media blockbuster of 1987, by far outstripping everyday potboilers like Punjab. An abortive aidpacked flotilla followed by a high-flying relief mission, a dramatic accord accompanied by some equally breathtaking acrobatics, and now a bloody tussle between IPKF paratroopers and LTTE landmines – India's involvement in Sri Lanka has been a steadily growing affair; but this transition from a mediator's role to that of an active agent has been far from smooth. It has generated a whole new set of frictions, and as Rajiv Gandhi tries to manoeuvre his way through this maze of contradictions, let us have a look at the balance sheet of his adventure so far in the island.

The dramatic discovery of a new "crony" in the octogenarian President Jayewardene and the consequent bonhomie of economic cooperation coupled with Colombo's pledge not to entertain any foreign interest inimical to India are perhaps the only significant external gains Rajiv Gandhi can look forward to. But in the process India has badly alienated herself from the Tamils in Sri Lanka while this action has hardly endeared her to the average Sinhala citizen. If any thing the Sinhalas including a sizable section of the ruling party and the entire party and the entire opposition now look at India with more suspicion, as is bound to be generated by the massive number of Indian soldiers stationed in this island. And beyond the region, this action will erode Rajiv's credibility among ethnic and non-resident Indians throughout the world as a "friend in need".

WHEN PEACE BECOMES WAR....

According to the Indian government, Sri Lanka is now all set to enter an era of "real peace and tranquility", for the newly discovered headquarter of all trouble, the "dreaded" Jaffna peninsula has now been "liberated once and for all" from the "vicious grip" of the Tigers. After a fortnight-long fierce fighting IPKF jawans have "accomplished this historic feat". The offensive, we are told, could have been brought to a successful conclusion much earlier and at far less cost for the Indian side, but the jawans did not press for a quick resolution in order to restrict civilian casualties to a minimum (sic!). Given the "information embargo" imposed by India on the entire arena of her "war for peace" in the Tiger-infested Northern Province one could not get a live coverage of the Indian Peace Killing Mission, all that one can piece together from the reports of refugees who could escape the jaws of death in Jaffna and reach Colombo to narrate their harrowing experience can only be a rough sketch of what transpired there in that fateful fortnight.

Here is a despatch from Gerard Peres, datelined Madras, October 21:

According to frantic messages from civil servants, Christian missionaries and other human rights activists of the Jaffna town to President Jayewardene, over 1000 Tamils, including several local people, apart from youths shot at sight taken to be Tigers, have so far perished in the offensive. However much is the Indian media offensive here, in which defence ministry and the external affairs ministry are going out of their way to please editors and newsmen, the facts will become clear in the long run that this time, it was India, and not Sri Lanka, which was at war with the Tamils.

Now here is the scale of the offensive and the casualty figures on both sides so far: over 1000 Tamils, most of them local people and youth, killed in aerial bombing on those very places where people had been asked to take shelter; over 300 Indian soldiers killed, mostly by landmine blasts, with another 100 para- troopers gunned down in the Jaffna University campus near the LTTE headquarters; 120 mm mortar guns used to shell houses, killing people locked up inside; tanks used to raze down entire residential areas in and around Jaffna peninsula in order to mow down suspected LTTE strongholds; the entire city suffering an economic and military blockade for nearly seven days, causing untold misery to the people who would have liked to stay on with the Tigers; the population being starved out before they are forced to drop their help to the Tiger guerillas who were determined to fight; and last but not the lkeast, the Indian army letting itself loose, whenever given a chance, on the local people – and that includes women.

With the Indian media crying for the blood of the aTigers, the tone of the Tigers, the tone of the discourse in India now is very similar to what has been going on in Colombo for the last four years. Yes, Colombo has been transplanted to Delhi, Madras and the various cities of our country with editors and editorials beaming with joy to scream: Jaffna Falls, Jaffna Falling, Areas Pacified, Tiger Newspapers Neutralised, Tiger Escape Routes Sealed. The war frenzy in the media is evident with none of the newspapers even willing to check up and give the exact figures of the dead Indian soldiers: they could have easily done that by visiting the various military hospitals casually and tapping hospital sources informally.... The fact that our editors are satisfied with the official toll figure of 100 speaks volumes for their disregard for checking up directly... And then, there has been not a word about the IPKF's blowing up of two Tamil newspaper offices from our editors and newsmen. Perhaps they don't know what awaits them in the future.

(Operation Pawan)

CIVILIANS □ KILLED

KOKUVIL

S. Paikium	A. Balakumar
K. Puvaneswary	S. Sivapaikium
S. Karalasingam	S. Mahathevan
G. Ruthiran	S. Muthupillai
K. Krishnarajah	T. Sothilingam
M. Puniyakanthan	P. Ramasamy
S. Sumathy	R. Navaratnam
S. Puscal	T. Vaithilingam
K. Sinniah	V. Thambiah
R. Kamalanathan	S. Sivakumar
J. Keethakumari	R. Ponnammah
R. Rajarajan	K. Markandu
K. Sinnathurai	M. Kandiah
Y. Myuri	N. Sridharan
S. Kandiah	R. Kumarasamy
S. Sutharsini	V. Satkunanathan
P. Murugesu	K. Kandiah
S. Sivasubramanium	P. Pumani
S. Thavamani	Panchalingam
S. Sivasankar	Rajakumar
T. Nagaratnam	Sinnappu
S. Rasammah	Sinnakutty
P. Appiah	Nageswary
K. Elangainathan	Kanagalingam
S. Arul Ambalam	Parameswaran
K. Sellathurai	Illangeswaran
S. Arunana	Sellammah
S. Sivasothy	K. Pooranam
P. Subathirai	S. Yogalingam
P. Veeran	S. Chandran
M. Sinnathamby	M. Vimaladevi
S. Saraswathy	S. Balaratnam
S. Kayathiri	A. Manonmany
J. Pathmarani	A. Kamaladevi

On the domestic plane, some commentators argue that this decisive action against Tamil militants will definitely have a "demonstration effect" on our own Khalistani terrorists. But this irony is that while one is yet to find any evidence of such a sobering influence in troubled Punjab, there is every indication that down south the Indian Tamils are fuming with fury. And a seemingly unbreakable Congress(I) – AIADMK marriage has come under considerable conjugal strains. The economic savings that may result if New Delhi can go ahead with its plans of repatriating all Sri Lankan Tamils currently staying in India, have already been more than offset by what the Indian military presence has already cost our national exchequer – put at Rs. 3 crore a day by a Sri Lankan minister – not to mention the huge loss of manpower and hardware suffered by the Indian army till date. And as regards the Congress(I)'s plan to play the Sri Lankan card as a diversionary tactic, the situation has been most succinctly summed up by satirist Rajinder Puri: "People have stopped talking about the mess on Bofors, they talk only of the mess in Sri Lanka.." All in all, for Rajiv Gandhi it has really been a jump from the frying "Bofors" pan into the raging Sri Lankan fire.

It's a National Disgrace...

BUT Rajiv's crashlanding into the Sri Lankan soup is also a matter of shame and disgrace for the entire nation. There's no way we can explain this act of great betrayal to the Sri Lankan Tamils in the name of helping them achieve a peaceful political solution to their long-standing problems. We may prefer a solution to the island's ethnic crisis within the framework of a unified Sri Lanka, and given the geographical and ethnic proximity between Sri Lanka and India we can also try various political and diplomatic means to bring the two sides to the negotiation table. And despite several reservations about the specifics of Indian initiatives, there has never really been any two opinions on this score. But we must always make sure that our political and diplomatic intervention does not become a counter productive proposition. In our bid to improve things we must not make matter worse. And of course, we can never be allowed to go to the extent of forcing our preference or will on either side. Yet the IPKF's Jaffna war has done precisely that. While we could do little to prevent Colombo from its usual dilly-dallying about the implementation of the accord we have spared no effort to smash the LTTE – the backbone of the Tamil resistance movement in Sri Lanka. Indeed, it is a tribute to the Tigers' zeal, skill and close integration with the Jaffna populace that they could keep the advancing Indian troops at bay for more than a fortnight while majority of their ranks could flee to safer areas. But by all means it will take them years to regroup and regain their strength and meanwhile the Sri Lankan government will make all-out efforts to snatch back whatever "concessions" they have so far been forced to make. Already the amnesty has been withdrawn and Colombvo has declared its intention to have a fresh interim Administration Council without any representation from LTTE.

While Tamils on the other side of the strait have thus been directly at the receiving end, there are no less grave portents for the people in India either. The Indian army is now all the more brutalised after the experience they have gained in Sri Lanka and to be sure, sooner rather than later, we Indians will have to face its consequences. The process of militarisation which has already begun to assume alarming proportions in recent years will henceforth be further stepped up with all its disastrous implications for our dilapidated democracy. That military strategists are gradually taking a more and more active role in the formultion of various government policies regarding home and foreign affairs has been known for quite some time now and India's Sri Lanka policy provides a striking instance of this emerging advisors simply do not have a place in it. And last but not the least, there is the dangerous spectre of chauvinism vitiating the whole political climate and our democratic values being overrun – whether by war frenzy or a resurgent Tamil secessionism.

Enough is Enough...

ONLY an effective intervention on the part of democratic forces can forestall these disastrous developments. Let us force Rajiv Gandhi not only to order an immediate withdrawal of Indian troops from Sri Lanka and dissolution of the intelligence network created to assist army operation – that will be now too little, too late – but also to involve Indian and international human rights organisations to find out human rights violations and atrocities perpetrated by Indian soldiers on the civilian population in Jaffna and mete out exemplary punishment to all erring man in uniform. The government must also be compelled to publish a White Paper on its army action in Sri Lanka, giving the true figures of casualties on both sides and also what it has cost our national exchequer. And last but not the least, New Delhggi must be prevented from carrying out its plans of immediately deporting all Sri Lankan Tamil refugees from the Indian soil.

As our "Bofors Prime Minister" remains Booby-trapped in Sri Lanka, this is the minimum that democratic forces can do so as not to find themselves rendered irrelevant by chauvinists of all hues. Moreover, Rajiv's war against LTTE is yet another palpable proof of the kind of a mess he will make if allowed to rule any longer. Should we not heed this warning of history before it gets too late?

CRP

On the 10th October 1987, the IPKF fired its first shot against the LTTE. The LTTE controlled press, "*Eelamurasu*" and "*Murasoli*" had their printing proesses blasted by the IPKF at 5 a.m. in the morning. By 10.00 a.m. the IPKF versus LTTE battle was on in all its fury. The IPKF started attacking not only the LTTE out the very people whose lives and property they had allegedly come to protect. The scale of operations and the magnitude of casualties and agencies of the war were unprecedented in the 5 year old ethnic war. The Indians used T-72 tanks gun carriers and artillery and mortars on the ground. Planes and helicopters strafed and bombed from the air. The Indians considered the Tamils a subject race and freely engaged in rape, plunder and wanton shooting and killing.

The population of the Jaffna Town is close to 150,000. The population of the Jaffna Peninsula is nearly 800,000. On or about 10.10.87 the IPKF annnounced over the radio that the civilians were to take refuge in three centres in Jaffna Town viz:- Jaffna Hindu College, Jaffna Hindu Ladies College and Nallur Hindu Temple. No mention was made of other centres within or out of Jaffna Town. People started running to the nearest school, church or temple. Neither the said three centres nor the other places of refuge had sufficient shelter or amenities to cater to such a large number of people. Hundreds of people started moving out of the Peninsula on feet and on whatever means of transport was available. They travelled by road, by-roads along the coast and by canoe. Enrbute quite a number were moved down by mortar fire and helicopter strafing. Rotting bodies lay where they had fallen to be attacked by dogs and crows. Refugee Centres were not spared from attack. Shells fell on refugee camps at St. Patrick's College, St John's Chundikuli Girls School, Jaffna Hindu College, Jaffna Hindu Ladies College, Kokuvil Hindu College, Jaffna Railway Station and Inuvil Amman Hindu Temple just to name a few. At most of these centres some refugees died as a result of the shell attacks. Even in the nights refugees could not sleep. Shells and fragments were falling like rain, day and night.

Some specific incidents of Wanton killing and Destruction

On 12.10.1987 the Indian para-troops were dropped in end near the Jaffna University Campus. About 29 of the para-troops were killed by LTTE ground fire. The next day, 200 IPKF Personnel arrived at the scene and killed 40 civilians - men, women and children. Several Houses in the area were destroyed.

Between 10.10.1987 and 30.11.1987 over 100 residents of Urumpirai were shot and killed by the IPKF. Houses and buildings abutting the roads passing through Urumpirai were blasted.

Between 12.10.1987 and 30.11.1987 the IPKF force stationed at the Ceylon Transport Board Depot at Kondavil destroyed all nearby houses and killed 90 civilians of the area.

On 21.10.1987 137 persons were shot and killed by the IPKF in the Jaffna Hospital premises. 20 of them were hospital staff - 3 Doctors included. The rest were indoor and out-door patients, relatives of patients and those who sought refuge in the premises. A mass cremation took place in the hospital premises on 23.10.1987.

On 22.10.1987 about 100 refugees wanting to leave the Jaffna mainland for Kayts island were fired on by helicopter while they were in boats midway; 19 of them perished.

CIVILIANS □ KILLED (Operation Pawan)

Parasakthi 21.10.87

K.J. Peter 21.10.87

Mrs. Punithavathi 21.10.87

S. Renuka 21.10.87

A. Senathirsja 21.10.87

J. Theres 21.10.87

K. Vedaranyam 21.10.87

M. Ariyaratnam 22.10.87

Ariyaratnam 22.10.87

Lorthi Peterson 22.10.87

V. Mayilvaganam 22.10.87

S. Sinnadurai 22.10.87

A. Yasodaran 22.10.87

V.A. Cruz 23.10.87

William 23.10.87

Darsan, Darmila 24.10.87

N.S. Kirubairaja 24.10.87

D.S. Kulasingam 24.10.87

CIVILIANS □ KILLED (Operation Pawan)

R. Lakshmanan 24.10.87

Rajini 24.10.87

S. Rajasekaram 24.10.87

A. Sellasamy 24.10.87

K. Kripakaran 25.10.87

S. Balachandran 26.10.87

L.J. Dharmaraj 26.10.87

Kamala Devi 26.10.87

Shanmugalingam 26.10.87

I. Vamadevan 26.10.87

T. Dharmalingam 27.10.87

C.T. Kumarasami 27.10.87

K.S. Mathews 27.10.87

P. Sowrimuthu 27.10.87

S. Velayudapillai 27.10.87

A. Visalakshi 27.10.87

N. Jegatheeswaran 28.10.87

Murugiah 28.10.87

CRP

On 25.10.1987 the IPKF directed heavy mortar five on Kokuvil Hindu College. A large number of refugees had taken shelter there. 51 were killed. IPKF apologised later saying that they have taken the College for a factory. Most of the dead were buried or cremated at the site itself.

On 27.10.1987 Chavakachcheri, a small town was hit by rocket and gun fire from a helicopter 35 persons in the market area and vicinity were killed.

On 5.11.1987 Kalapoomy in Karainagar was strafed by helicopter. 12 persons died.

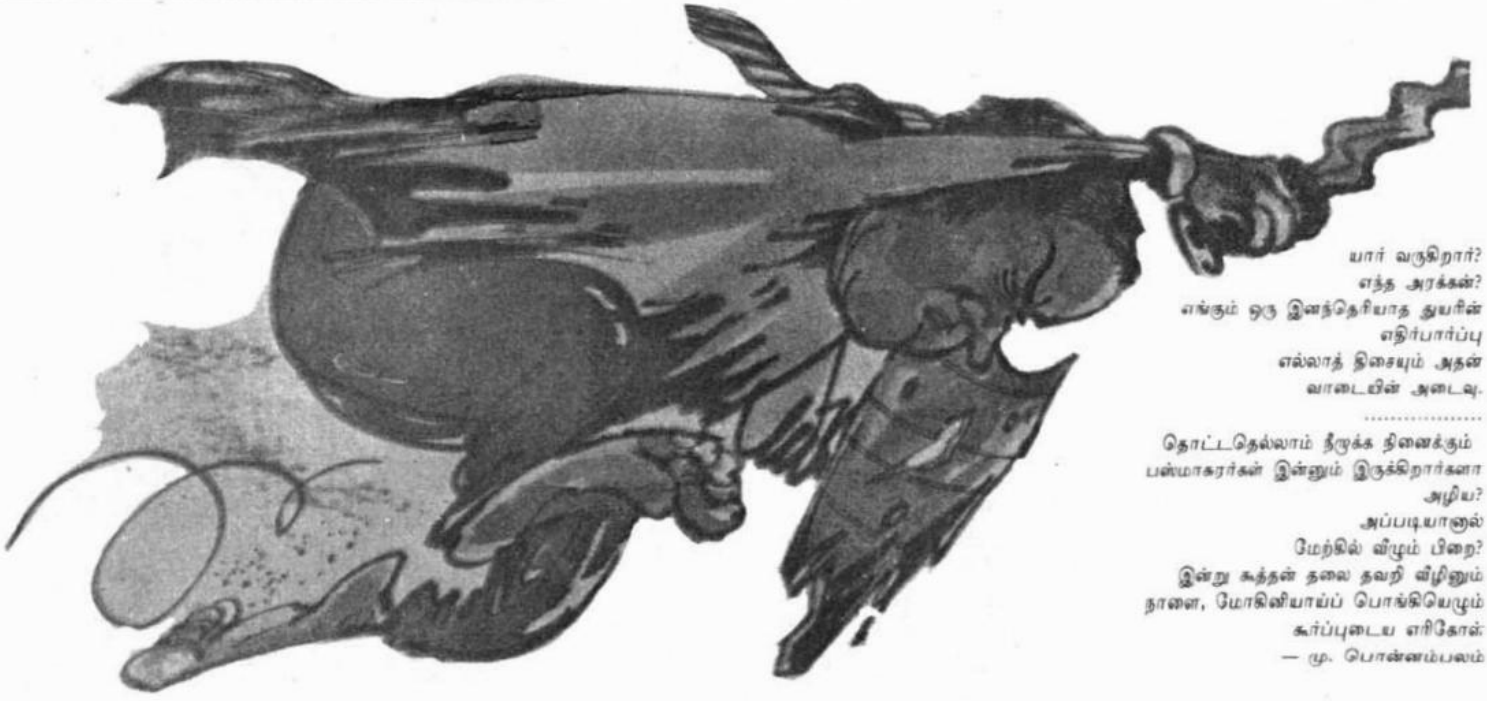
There were nearly 40,000 refugees camping in the precincts of the Nellur Hindu Temple in Jaffna. Like at other refugee centres each had to fend for himself for food and water. They had to make do with a dozen or less number of toilets with the result that within a week, bowel diseased were rampant. Refugees started dying of diarrhoea daily. For days togethere similar conditions prevailed in all refugee centres. People were herded under these conditions till the IPKF relaxed their earlier order and allowed them to return to their homes by the end of October. But even by mid-November, 1987 in the Jaffna Municipal area alone 13,000 refugees were still at the places where they had taken refuge – either their homes were demolished or they had no means to get to their distant homes. Some of these people had entered refugee camps after making abortive attempts to get away from the Peninsula.

Prolonged Curfew:

The curfew imposed at 6 p.m. on 10.10.87 was not lifted till 6 a.m. 15.10.87. It was re-imposed at 10.45 a.m. on 15.10.87. The re-imposed curfew of 5.10.87 was to be an indefinite one in that no time for its relaxation was stated at the time it was re-imposed. It was finally relaxed in the Municipal area of Jaffna at 12 noon on 20.10.87, after a record period of 14 days. There is still a daily curfew though all India Radio States almost daily that Jaffna has returned to near normaley. The curfew in France during Nazi occupation was only from midnight to dawn.

பத்துத் தலைகளும் இருபது கரங்களும்
நிக்கெல்லாம் தேடிவரும்

— க. வில்வரத்தினம்



யார் வருகிறார்?
எந்த அரக்கன்?
எங்கும் ஒரு இனந்தெரியாத துயரின்
எதிர்பார்ப்பு
எல்லாத் திசையும் அதன்
வாடையின் அடைவு.

.....

தொட்டதெல்லாம் நீருக்க நினைக்கும்
பஸ்மாகரர்கள் இன்னும் இருக்கிறார்களா
அழிய?
அப்படியானால்
மேற்தில் விழும் பிறை?
இன்று கூத்தன் தலை நவறி விழினும்
நாளை, மோகினியாய்ப் பொங்கியெழும்
கூர்ப்புடைய எரிதோள்

— மு. பொன்னம்பலம்

வீர வணக்கம்

LTTE MARTYRS

போற்றுமின், மறவீர்! சாற்றுதும், நும்மை;
ஊர்க்குறு மாக்கள் ஆடக் கலங்கும்
தாள்படு சின்னீர் களிறு அட்டு வீழ்க்கும்
ஈர்ப்புடைக் கராஅத்து அன்ன என்ஐ
நுண்பல் கருமம் நினையாது,
'இளையன்' என்று இகழின், பெறல் அரிது, ஆடே
ஒளவையார். A poem from *Purananooru*, the ancient Tamil anthology in praise of Valour

Das 8.10.87

Vedhamani 13.10.87

Mohamed

Viji

Newman 22.10.87

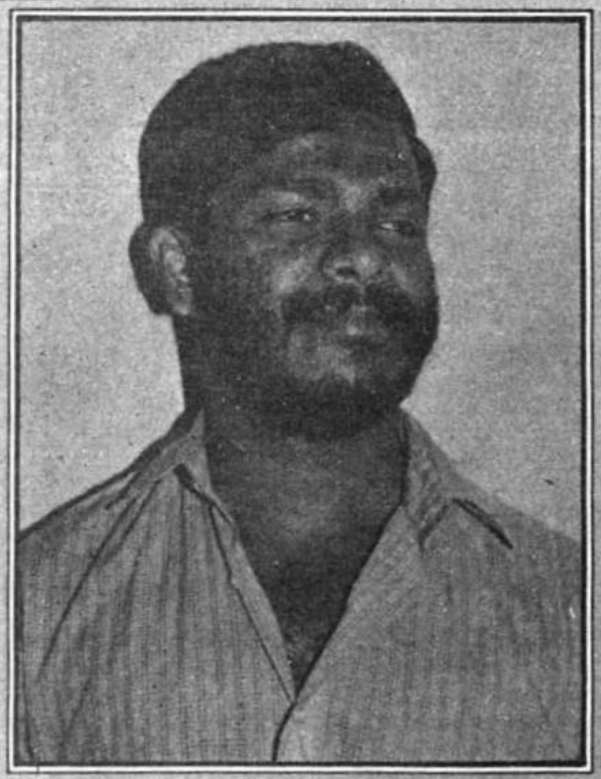
Capt Rathish 24.10.87
Baskar 19.10.87
Lt. Veeramani 23.10.87
Thavarasa 10.10.87
2nd Lt. Malathi 10.10.87
Kasthuri 10.10.87
Thaya 10.10.87
Ranjani 10.10.87
Ranjan 10.10.87
Nimal 12.10.87
Amal 12.10.87
Peres 12.10.87
Das 12.10.87
Anton 12.10.87
Ganesh 12.10.87
Charles 12.10.87
Akilan 12.10.87
Ganesh 12.10.87
Chandran 13.10.87
Devan 13.10.87
Mohan 13.10.87

Das 8.10.87
Vedhamani 13.10.87
Newman 22.10.87
Lt. Elango 14.10.87
Sasi 19.10.87
Preman 13.10.87
Raja 13.10.87
Akbar 13.10.87
Seelan 15.10.87
Ganesavel 16.10.87
Muthu 16.10.87
Remington 21.10.87
Simon 23.10.87
Ganesh 27.10.87
Felix 12.10.87
Kanagasabai 17.10.87
Elango 17.10.87
Linges 21.10.87
Ansar 18.10.87
Kamal 25.10.87
Guhan 18.10.87

Sun 13.10.87
Daniel 13.10.87
Indran 13.10.87
Rayman 13.10.87
Nawaz 13.10.87
Muthu 13.10.87
Paran 13.10.87
Newman 13.10.87
Sarala 14.10.87
Ramesh 14.10.87
Selvam 14.10.87
Sada 15.10.87
Anusuya 15.10.87
Henrich 16.10.87
Easan 16.10.87

Gajan 16.10.87
Vellai 16.10.87
Mayuran 16.10.87
Maj. Ashok 17.10.87
Vijay 17.10.87
Nandan 17.10.87
Allen 18.10.87
Janaa 18.10.87
Viji 18.10.87
Raj 18.10.87
Noel 18.10.87
Mohamed 18.10.87
Lt. Col. Santhosam 21.10.87
Kumaradas 27.10.87
Puliyan 27.10.87

2nd Lt. Malathi 10.10.87



Lt. Col. Santhosam 21.10.87

லெப்.கேணல்
புலேந்திரன்
லெப்.கேணல்குமரப்பா
மேஜர்அப்துல்லா
கப்டன்ரகு
5.10.87
நினைவஞ்சலி
லெப்.தவக்குமார்
கப்டன்நளினி
லெப்.அன்பழகன்
கப்டன்பரணி
லெப்மேஜர்ஆனந்தகுமார்
லெப்மேஜர்ரெஜினோல்ட்
கப்டன்கர்ணன்
கப்டன்மிதுன்
ராஜீவின் நம்பிக்கைத்
துரோகத்தால் பலியான
தியாகிகள்

KILLING □ FIELD

87 October

claims	IPKF KILLED	IPKF WOUNDED	LTTE KILLED	LTTE WOUNDED	S.L. ARMY KILLED	S.L. ARMY WOUNDED	OTHER MILITANTS KILLED	OTHER MILITANTS WOUNDED	CIVILIANS KILLED	CIVILIANS WOUNDED
IPKF										
LTTE										
MEDIA										

2

5

		13						146	
		13							

6

7

9

			98c					14	

10

								9	
		7						10	
	-								

11

9		120	43c						
40								55	270

12

18	79	163							
29		9						44	104

13

44	238	15	7c						
		11						60	

14

66	18c	3							
18	4 21c	3						1	2

15

23	11							10*	
47	5	2						2	

16

	14	127							
		5						7	3

17

		27	4c						
60		3							30c

18

13	39								
		6						9	100

19

20

3			40c					41	
	2c							51	2

21

10		1						733	168

22

2	4		2c						

24

3	5	60							

25

4								28	65

26

5	28	20							
								17	15

27

		7*		4					
		2						50	55

28

13	18c							20	

29

6	11	67							250
								3	18

30

								104	

TOTAL

205	421 36c	622	194	4				240	250
208	9 23c	62						1174	802 300

* - Sri Lankan Information.c-captured. EP-EPRLF T-TELO, P-PLOTE, EN-ENDLF, E-EROS TNA-Tamil National Army CVF-Citizen s Voluntary Force

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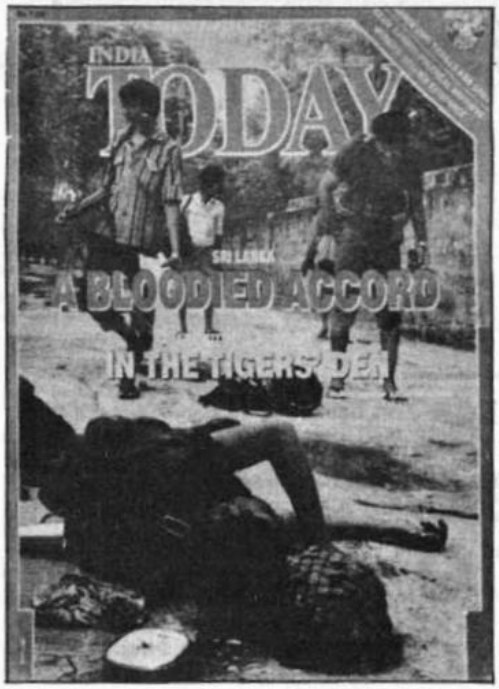

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CHAPTERS

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1987

the heinous crimes of indian peace keeping

13

Premadasa charges IPKF with genocide.

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18

LTTE free 18 IPKF captives without pre-conditions.

19

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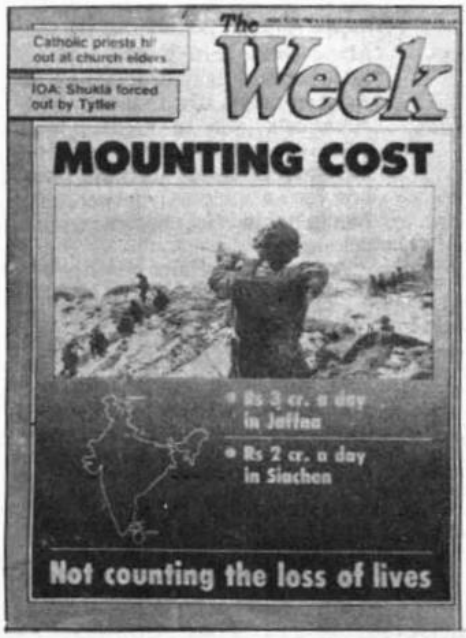
November

21


Catholic priests h/ out at church elders
IOA: Shukla forced out by Tytler
The Week
MOUNTING COST
• Rs 3 cr. a day in Jaffna
• Rs 2 cr. a day in Siachen
Not counting the loss of lives

24

25

28

29

The Sunday Observer

There is strong public feeling in Jaffna against the IPKF, reports JYOTI MALHOTRA after a visit

REPORT

Unwanted presence

AS the helicopter rises over Palaly, the Indian Peace-Keeping Force's base in Sri Lanka, a quiet, serene land comes into view: submerged rice fields, clusters of date palms, quaint red-tiled roofs of little houses. In a few minutes beautiful blue-green lagoon stretches into the horizon. Jaffna.

The town is deathly quiet. Occasionally, on the deserted streets, Indian jawans appear in camouflaged gear, patrolling what little there is left: a pockmarked post office, a railway station, old, torn posters of a film flapping on the billboard of Regal cinema, the once-famous Ashoka Hotel reduced to rubble by continuous shelling. In the distance, the intermittent thunder of mines being defused by the IPKF break the eerie silence.

Speaking to a group of a national and international journalists Maj-General AS Kalkat, commander of IPKF operations in Sri Lanka declares, "This is not a war that the Indian army is fighting. We are here to support the two governments in implementing the accord, an essential part of which is to disarm the militant LTTE. In doing so, we are ever mindful that the larger population of Jaffna which has been under the totalitarian rule of the LTTE for almost half a decade, is now coming out of its trauma." He added, "We cannot let terrorists hold at ransom two sovereign nation states who are trying to protect democracy and bring it to this part of the island."

That mutual attempt at the democratisation of the northern and eastern parts of Sri Lanka found its formal echo in the signing of an accord between the two countries on July 29. Touted as the high point of Rajiv Gandhi's prime ministership, the agreement required the IPKF to disarm the militants (while the Sri Lankan army remained confirmed to the barracks) as well as help set up a post-LTTE administration in the region.

Soon, it was decided that Tamil-speaking IAS officers would be sent to Sri Lanka. Then, two days ago a national daily reported that Indian Air Force gunships had strafed Chavakachery, killing and injuring civilians. With nearly 15,000 troops already fanned out on the island (some said 30,000) and an astronomical daily expenditure of Rs three crores, the similarity with America's war in Vietnam was unmistakable. A senior bureaucrat said, "India has become a colonial power. Sri Lanka has in effect become a puppet state."

An external affairs ministry official added, "The Indian army is not supposed to behave like an occupation army, overrunning the place, unmindful of who came in its way. And, it is for the first time ever that we have let our forces be legally commanded by a foreign government. An Indian peace-keeping force whether in Congo in 1961 or in Gaza, has always gone under the United Nations auspices, never on its own."

Jaffna was taken on the night of October 23 and 24, Diwali, when the IPKF, developing five thrusts — three from the north-south direction and one from the east and west — converged on the fort. The "war" had actually begun 13 days earlier, on October 10, when Nawathkuli was taken. Each column then advanced, gradually occupying territory until it met up with the first Marathas entrenched in the fort.

Despite its "victory" over Jaffna, the city from which the LTTE has traditionally drawn its strength and inspiration, the IPKF was not, even to the Tamil civilians in the town, the liberating army. A refugee at the make shift camp in Our Lady of the Refuge church, whose husband in peacetime worked in the Bank of Ceylon said "Jayewardene has handed over Sri Lanka to India."

She added with feeling, "Yes, the Indian army is feeding us today, but for the first three days we got only tea to drink. But we don't want other people's rice. We don't want India to interfere. We only want to go home and live peacefully." And then realising this correspondent was Indian too, she said accusingly, "So it is you, your people, who are doing all this."

Balasingham, a lawyer, reiterated, "We only want peace. It's unfortunate that the LTTE, which was shaping so well until the end of last month, should have made mistakes. But now we just want this fighting to end. And if the IPKF can give us peace, we will accept it."

The women recounted stories of looting by jawans, saying that during breaks in the 27-day curfew, some had returned home to find their jewellery missing. They admitted, however, that they had not heard of any cases of rape or other acts of physical violence perpetrated on women and children.

Another grocer, Thomas, pointing to the roof shelled by the IPKF, said, "The LTTE are very good people. After all they fought for our rights. The Indian army says it has preferred to die rather than let civilians get killed in the crossfire, but how do you know how many civilians have been really killed." He admitted that the Sri Lankan army had committed atrocities too on the Tamil population in Jaffna, but added, "The Indians are much worse. But anyway, the Tamils will get their rights. We will continue to fight for our freedom."

Sridhar, News Times.

Already, there are 30,000 troops stationed in Sri Lanka. Each day costs the Indian exchequer Rs eight crore. Men from the Central Reserve Police Force have been stationed in the island to assist operations. We appear to be stuck in Sri Lanka with the situation getting more and more complicated with each passing day.

That desperate motivation to die for a cause, characterised by the 14 LTTE men who preferred to swallow cyanide pills rather than be tortured at the hands of the enemy, will ensure that the hands of the Indian army are tied behind its back. Said an external affairs official, "And it may be years, even decades, before we are able to get out of Sri Lanka."

A captain in the army in Jaffna recounted the event, now grown into legend, when Kumarappa and Pulendran, amongst others, swallowed cyanide: Contrary to reports, he said, the 17 men captured on the high seas by the Sri Lankan navy, only had three cyanide pills. On the morning they realized that the IPKF and the Sri Lankans had decided that the latter should keep the men, the LTTE second in command, Mahathiah, slipped along some more pills when he came to give them their breakfast. The men, refused to eat it, for cyanide works more effectively on an empty stomach and slowly collapsed on the tarmac.

A brigadier at the Palaly base said, "We knew the LTTE guys so well, we were like friends. In fact we flew in Kumarappa's girlfriend into Sri Lanka, and I attended his wedding here. And a few days later he was dead."

At Nawathkuli, ten km from Jaffna, an ammunition dump had been laid out for the journalists' inspection, improvised with nails in them, Claymore mines, grenades hoisted on wooden sticks and uncalibrated mortar.

Maj-General Kalkat confirmed that a ship loaded with 500 to 700 sophisticated arms had been caught while offloading at the south-eastern coast of Sri Lanka. The arms had been for LTTE cadres, he added, but refused to say whether the ship had come from Singapore. "We know that the LTTE men mostly use AK-47 rifles and G-3 rifles which are reportedly used by the Mujahedin. Some other equipment with Pakistani markings has also been found," he added.

As the helicopter rises over Jaffna, a quiet, serene land comes into view. A closer look reveals, however, that the quiet is unreal; not a soul moves around the transplanted rice fields. Spirals of smoke rise between the clusters of palms, unmistakable evidence of burning ammunition dumps, and the roofs of the houses gape into the sky, their red tiles shelled out of existence.

IN PARLIAMENT

Opposition walk-out

From Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, Nov. 6.

The winter session of the Rajya Sabha began today on a pleasant note of felicitations to the new Chairman Mr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, but soon was caught in the storm of the Sri Lanka issue, culminating in a walk-out of the opposition groups, barring the AIADMK and the National Conference, minutes before the House itself rose for the lunch recess.

The reason for the Opposition discontent was that a discussion on the Sri Lankan situation was not listed in the day's agenda nor was there any clear indication of any statement from the Government being made today. The assurance of Mr. M. M. Jacob, Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs that he would find out when the Government could make the statement did not satisfy them.

Mini discussion: Though a full length discussion was not listed, the Chairman had allowed the Opposition leaders to raise the issue and this turned into a mini discussion for nearly an hour in which the Government of India came under heavy attack from all Opposition groups, including the AIADMK, for using its army against the LTTE.

'You are taking the role of Jayewardene', observed Mr. Aladi Aruna (AIADMK) while joining the other Opposition leaders in demanding an immediate ceasefire without any pre-condition. He wanted the Indian Government to heed the appeal of the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, Mr. M. G. Ramachandran, accept the ceasefire offer of the LTTE and negotiate with the LTTE. He noted that the AIADMK was all for the implementation of the Indo-Sri Lankan accord but felt the method adopted by the Indian Government was objectionable. 'You cannot implement the accord on gun-point', he added.

Precondition for ceasefire deplored: Mr. Aruna pointed out that already the LTTE had agreed to surrender arms and he wondered what was the difficulty for the Indian Government to accept it. In his view the Government of India should first order ceasefire and then demand surrender of arms by the LTTE. The insistence on surrender of arms as a precondition for ceasefire represented, in his view, a colonial attitude. He also feared that the IPKF might kill the LTTE leader Mr. Prabakaran, and put the blame on different groups within the LTTE. He alleged that the IPKF was engineering rumours of a rift in the ranks of the LTTE for this purpose.

Mr. Murasoli Maran (DMK) described the goings on in Sri Lanka as 'butchering of Tamils by the IPKF' and felt it was shocking and unheard of. He contended that there was no provision in the accord for sending army by India. Those who had supported the accord had thought it would be implemented by peaceful means.

Mr. Sukumoy Sen (CPI-M) expressed anguish over the situation in Sri Lanka which had taken a serious turn, leading to lot of bloodshed.

"No parallel": Mr. P. Upendra (Telugu Desam) felt that there was no parallel to what was happening in Sri Lanka. 'What India was doing in Sri Lanka today is most shameful and reprehensible', he added. He lamented that thousands were being killed in Sri Lanka even as talks were going on here between Mr. Rajiv Gandhi and Mr. J. R. Jayewardene. He blamed the Indian Government for having got involved 'foolishly' in this. He would not blame the Indian Army, which, he said, had been assigned an unpopular task.

Mr. Jaswant Singh (BJP) felt that the rate of casualty among the IPKF personnel was high and asked: 'which great national purpose or national interest is subserved by this?'

"Accord in shambles": Mr. M. S. Gurupadaswamy (Janata) said the accord was in a shambles and wondered why the Indian Prime Minister was not agreeing to ceasefire while the LTTE leaders had agreed to it. He also could not understand why the Prime Minister was demanding surrender of arms before ceasefire. In his view, the Prime Minister had put at stake his personal prestige.

Mr. Ram Avadesh Singh (Lok Dal) demanded immediate ceasefire.

The discussion was marked by noisy clashes between the Opposition and ruling party members. The first one came when the Prime Minister left the House after the felicitations to the Chairman had concluded. As he was leaving, the Opposition members including Mr. V. Gopalaswamy (DMK) demanded his return. The Union Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, Mr. H. K. L. Bhagat took exception to this demand. He was supported by Mr. A. G. Kulkarni (Cong-I) who described the conduct of the Opposition members as condemnable. Subsequently, Mr. Aladi Aruna (AIADMK) had a wordy duel with the Congress (I) members as he criticised the Government.

Adjourn move not admitted in Lok Sabha

NEW DELHI, Nov. 6

The entire Opposition, barring the AIADMK, staged a walk out in the Lok Sabha in protest against the Speaker's refusal to admit an adjournment motion on the "explosive" situation in Sri Lanka today itself.

Mr. Balram Jakhar told the agitated Opposition members that the Government would make a statement on the Sri Lanka situation on Monday and that he would permit a discussion on Tuesday.

Govt. statement first: Mr. Jakhar observed that he had no objection to the Opposition adjournment motion, sought to be tabled by Mr. Madhu Dandavate and many other Opposition leaders. But said he would allow the discussion after Government's statement.

While leaving the House, Mr. Dandavate and other Opposition leaders contended that an adjournment motion had an element of censure and it could not be deferred. "We want to censure the Government," they added.

Mr. Jakhar said that in his meeting with the Opposition leaders yesterday an agreement was reached on holding a discussion on the situation in Sri Lanka. He would have allowed the debate today but there were certain compulsions, he added.

WITNESS TO ATROCITIES

INTERVIEW

November 2, 1987

'I NEVER believed I would come out alive,' said Sekaram Moorthy of his recent terrifying visit to the Jaffna Peninsula in Sri Lanka.

He, his wife and two young daughters returned to his birthplace for the first time in eight years – and entered a nightmare.

A week after reaching his home village of Urumpirai, a few miles south of Jaffna City, the shelling by Indian troops began.

In the terrifying three weeks before he returned home at the end of October, he witnessed the death of his cousin, the killing of dozens of friends and the disappearance of his own father.

He and his family narrowly escaped death on numerous occasions as Indian helicopter gunships, armoured vehicles and jet bombers machine-gunned and strafed innocent civilians fleeing the army advance.

Sekaram told his story without dates and times: 'When you wake up, you don't know which day it is. For eight or nine days we did not sleep at all.

'The shells began exploding around our house. It goes on for two or three hours.

'Early on I wanted to see the damage. I went out of the back door of my house with my uncle, and through the back yards. There were four men on the side of the road, all dead. Then I passed the dead body of a child. It's back was split open, just as if a butcher's knife had been used.

'There was a man lying nearby, who looked as if he had tried to escape.

'I felt really sick and didn't want to go any further. But my uncle carried on. He went to the temple. When he returned, he said that 14 people including children had died there through a bomb or a shell.

He learned later that his uncle's daughter had died – on her 16th birthday.

'She had said to us the day before "it's my birthday tomorrow, anything could happen". When the shelling

began near my uncle's house, he and other people nearby came to shelter. He was worried that the house would be a target, and he suggested everyone went under a big tree.

'The shell hit the tree, and a fragment of shrapnel about the size of a 50p bit went into her stomach and up into her chest. She died soon afterwards.

'It was that day that I decided we must leave.'

The Indian army was shelling Urumpirai from three points of the compass. While Sekaram was wondering what to do as the shells fell, a group of villagers came running past. The shouted out that Tamil Tiger fighters had urged them to get out of the village down that road.

Sekaram's family dropped everything and ran with them.

'We ran down the road in a group, though my wife suggested we might be a target if we were a group.

'Soon, we saw three helicopters coming. We all ran into a banana plantation and threw ourselves down into the mud.

Helicopters

'The helicopters went overhead, and then one of them turned back. I thought it was coming to shoot us. I told my wife to take one of the children and get away from me. One of us must survive, I thought.

'As the helicopter came back, my eldest daughter asked me: "Daddy, are we going to die?". It was then that I cried openly.

'I had cried before, but I had always tried to hide it from the children and my wife. I still feel a little ashamed of it, but only those who have experienced such fear can know what it is like.'

Luckily the helicopter passed, and the family walked several miles through the country lanes, passing other terrified civilians, many weeping for dead relatives.

Eventually, they found their way to the house of another uncle. A crowd of local people were gathered at his house.

When the Indian troops first came to the region, some Tamils believed that perhaps the slaughter would stop. Bomb shelters constructed under houses were filled in during those early days when the hope of peace was still prevalent.

Sekaram's uncle had the foresight to leave his bunker as it was, and neighbours now gathered to seek shelter there.

But the group were not expecting the other form of terror used by the Indian troops – the jeep and troop carrier using random machine-gun fire. Sekaram's uncle had gone round the back of the house to look out for helicopters when he suddenly reappeared, screaming 'run, run!'

Soldiers

'We all ran out onto the main road, and there I saw a jeep full of soldiers shooting at anything and everything. As we ran, one cousin was hit in the leg. He fell. But you know that if you go back, someone else will be shot. We left him there.

'I learned later that he spent the night lying in the road. He lost a lot of blood, but he just survived.

'I don't know where we ran to after that. I was told later it was a place called Neerbeli. We stayed there the night and went on to Kopi. The shelling had begun there too, so we had to walk another ten miles to Puthur. Eventually we got a lift to Chavacheri. It was the only place at that time where there was a little peace.

'We met many people from my home village, who told us of the killing which had taken place which we knew nothing about. Some said they had seen some dead men near the village, and that one was a relative of mine. I still do not know, but I am living in hope that it was not my father.

'It is hard to know how many have been killed. Out of every ten people we met, I would estimate that six would tell of a dead relative, a son or daughter or father or mother.

'I fear very much for the people we met in Chavacheri. Many refugees from the other villages are gathered there. When the Indian army begin shelling that place, many hundreds will die.

'Others will die of starvation. The Indian army has imposed a 24-hour curfew, which has already lasted 15 days, and has been extended indefinitely.'

As the shelling grew closer to their temporary refuge, Sekaram decided that they must try and escape from the area. The normal route to Colombo was closed at Elephant Pass, where Indian troops had massacred people trying to escape.

The only remaining way out was across a stretch of water on the single ferry. The ferry ran continuously through the night carrying families fleeing the death and destruction of the Indian forces.

The night before they were due to go, gunfire and shelling was heard. Next morning, Sekaram learned of the death of ferry passengers waiting for the boat at the hands of a helicopter gunship.

'I knew we would die if we stayed, and perhaps we would die on the ferry. But I decided we must try and get out.'

The ride in the ferry was terrifying, all the passengers fearing that any minute a helicopter gunship would appear from the sky and find them a sitting target.

But once again, Sekaram and his family escaped death. The minibus ride to Colombo was still filled with fear. Indian troops stopped the vehicle at six separate points.

Savage

Back in England, Sekaram is still in a state of shock after his experience. As he told his story, he paced furiously about, expressing his fear, anger and sadness over the savage destruction of his homeland.

Split up from his relatives at home, he anxiously awaits news. He has already had the unhappy task of breaking the news of the deaths of brothers and sisters to two Tamil friends in England.

His greatest anger is directed against the Indian troops. 'The Indian government are big liars – the biggest liars in the world. They are not killing the Tigers, they are killing innocent people.

'The Indian troops are killing in cold blood and raping women. The young girls say the men are lucky because they will not be raped before they are shot.

'This claim that the Tigers are using civilians as shields is a lot of rubbish.

'When I arrived from England, I was opposed to the Tigers. But I found that the people there believe the Tigers are defending them.

'When the Tigers come past and ask for food, the people give them what they can. One day, my mother gave them food that was meant for us.

'I asked her why she had not kept it for her children, and she replied that now she had many children.

'Sometimes, the women will go out and risk their lives in search of food, or to bring them food. They say: "The Tigers are dying for us, so we must be prepared to die for them."

'I have never been a member or supporter of the Tigers, but this is what I now understand about how the people feel.

'What people must understand is that it is innocent people that the Indian troops are killing.'

IPKF will stay till end of mission: Gen. Sundarji

REPORT

From Our Staff Reporter

JAIPUR, Dec. 9.

Gen. K. Sundarji, Chief of the Army Staff, said here on Wednesday that the Indo-Sri Lanka accord was in the interest of both the nations and that the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) would continue its operations till the accord was implemented fully.

Talking to presspersons here, Gen. Sundarji said the peace-keeping mission in Sri Lanka was undertaken by the Army in the interest of India and to make sure that while the Tamil population in Sri Lanka got what was legitimately due to it the country remained united. Gen. Sundarji was in city to take salute at the investiture parade of the army.

The General observed that an ultimate solution to the Sri Lanka crisis could be brought about only through political means. For a political solution one should create the right atmosphere in that country in which all the parties concerned cooperated, he said. No self-respecting country could tolerate it if one of the parties involved resorted to terrorism and blackmail, he said referring to the activities of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

Gen. Sundarji said every concession was given to the LTTE to lay down arms but instead of cooperating they started attacking the IPKF as well as innocent Tamils. "We did our best to disarm them without the use of force but were disappointed. Our aim still is to persuade them to give up arms in a peaceful way," he said and expressed the hope that the tigers would eventually support the accord and join the mainstream of Sri Lanka society.

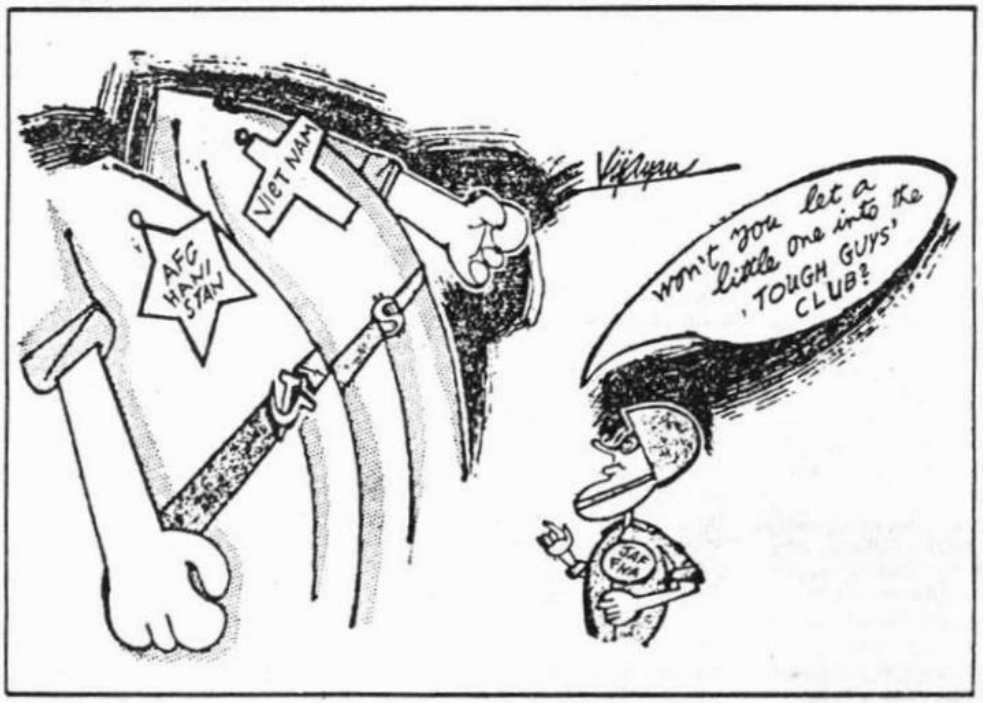
Answering a question on Indian involvement in the Sri Lankan crisis, Gen. Sundarji said it was in the interest of India that no unfriendly element remained in or operated from the Lankan soil. The IPKF was in Sri Lanka with a specific mission and it would remain there till the mission was complete, he said.

Referring to the changed stance of the tigers towards India, the General said the LTTE did not truly represent the Tamil population in Sri Lanka. They even kill innocent Tamils, he said. He regretted that people here, particularly those in the south, tended to believe in the LTTE propaganda than Sri Lankan Tamils themselves. The LTTE is alienated and a majority of the Tamils are for peace, he said.

Gen. Sundarji said the crisis would end as soon as the LTTE men laid down arms peacefully. "The present situation was forced upon our country by the adamant stand of the LTTE," he said and added that there could not be any compromise on terrorism within or outside the country.

The General expressed satisfaction over the performance of Indian soldiers in Sri Lanka and denied that there was any failure of army intelligence. He also refuted the propaganda that the casualty of Indian soldiers was more than what was given out.

O.V. Vijayan, The Statesman, 1.11.87.



Krishna Iyer sees a 'tragic irony' in role of IPKF

COCHIN, Nov. 1.

Mr. V. R. Krishna Iyer, former Judge of the Supreme Court, said in a statement that it was a "tragic irony" that Indian troops instead of keeping the peace had been tripped into waging a war against the Tamil militants.

The Sri Lankan President, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, had without firing a single shot and by using a "proxy army called the Indian Peace-Keeping Force," won the war against the Sri Lankan Tamils.

He said the Indian casualties had been heavy and the only allies on the island, the Tamils, had been estranged. The "atrocious LTTE boys who had assembled arms from miscellaneous sources and had organised themselves with little regular training, were giving battle as if they were a seasoned army." "Certainly, Pakistan must be watching with glee the fate of the Indian forces," he observed.

Mr. Krishna Iyer said he felt humiliated as an Indian that India should have been so neatly outwitted and the patriotic jawans so pathetically stultified.

Helplessness of ethnic Tamils: What would be even more disastrous was the sequel that he apprehended. It was quite on the cards that Mr. Jayewardene might ask the Indian army to quit now that he had crushed the extremists. He might then move his won Sinhala forces. "Thus the total helplessness of the ethnic minority which sought Indian help would be complete, thanks to the adventurism latent in the instant Indo-Sri Lanka pact," he said.

Terrible travesty: The Tigers, Mr. Krishna Iyer said, were a "violent, adventurist, bloodthirsty brood," but the Government of India had lost the initiative in exposing their "blackguardly tactics." In Jaffna, they played the patriots and the Indians the invaders in what amounted to a terrible travesty.

He suggested to the Prime Minister that the administration of the North and the East of Sri Lanka be handed over to Tamil surrogates right now, the Indian forces pulled out and the door opened discreetly for a dialogue with the saner militants and even the progressive Sinhala elements.

Herald Tribune INTERNATIONAL

87 November

REPORT

Indian Military Establishment Rocked by Losses in Sri Lanka

NOVEMBER 2, 1987

By Steven R. Weisman
New York Times Service

NEW DELHI — Indian Army losses to Tamil rebels in Sri Lanka this month have shaken the Indian military establishment and raised questions among many experts about the quality of New Delhi's military intelligence and planning.

More than 200 Indian troops have been killed and more than 700 wounded in fighting in Sri Lanka since Oct. 10, when Indian troops moved to disarm Tamil guerrillas at their stronghold in the northern city of Jaffna. The Indian losses were the largest since the war with Pakistan in 1971.

The Jaffna operation was proclaimed a success when Jaffna was captured by Indian troops last week. But Indian officials also expressed disappointment that the major guerrilla leaders escaped.

India sent troops to Sri Lanka to guarantee a peace accord signed by Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi of India and President Junius R. Jayawardene of Sir Lanka on July 29. Under it, Tamil separatists were to give up their arms in return for increased autonomy in largely Tamil areas in the north and east.

For years India had been sympathetic to the Tamil cause, allowing guerrilas to use Indian territory for training and political operations. But when the rebels — who accuse the majority Sinhalese of discriminating against them — refused to accept the accord to end the ethnic conflict, the Indians eventually turned against them.

Many military analysts also say India misjudged the conflict, using a conventional force of 20,000 to 30,000 men against guerrillas skilled at hit-and run tactics. They said India also underestimated the effect of mines and other explosives planted on roads. Scores of soldiers died in such blasts.

A senior Indian official said in an interview that "there has been some inadequacy in intelligence, particularly regarding the activities and whereabouts of the leaders of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, the separatist guerrilla group defending Jaffna.

He also acknowledged that the Indian Army had been unprepared to wage a major guerrilla war, since Indian forces went to Sri Lanka thinking that they would only keep the peace and receive weapons voluntarily surrendered.

"The timing of this operation was not up to us," the official said. "It would have been better to choose the operation, obtain intelligence and choose the best timing. Here was something just thrust on us."

But the Indian official and others defended the performance of Indian troops overall, asserting that the major reason for the heavy losses was a decision to avoid aerial bombardments and to move slowly to avoid civilian casualties. Indians recalled that civilian casualties in earlier operations by the Sri Lankan Army enraged Tamil civilians and drove them to sympathize with the guerrillas.

"No other army in the world could have done better," the official said. "Only a highly disciplined army could have taken these casualties and still occupied Jaffna with a minimum loss of life to civilians."

The question of civilian casualties remains a matter of dispute, with India saying the losses were slight and some Tamil spokesmen in Sri Lanka asserting that hundreds of civilians died. India says 600 guerrillas were killed, but the guerrillas insist that most of these were civilians.

Criticism has come from military and diplomatic analysts in Sri Lanka, particularly in the Sri Lankan Army. The Sri Lankans, however, admit to some resentment when the Indian Army came into their country projecting the attitude that it could succeed with the Tamils where others had failed.

"These people made the same mistakes that we made in the beginning," a Sri Lankan official said. "They never learned the psyche of the terrorist. This is a battle that has to be fought on your belly, literally and in other ways. Your brain has to be on the ground and not in the clouds."

A Western diplomat said the Indian Army's performance could have repercussions for New Delhi. "You can be sure that Pakistan and China are watching very closely," he said, referring to the two countries that have fought wars with India and with which border tensions remain high.

Despite the heavy Indian losses, there has been no popular outcry in India for a troop withdrawal. But indications are that inside the military establishment, some blame is being apportioned.

Several Indian news organizations have reported that Major General Harkirat Singh, the commander in the Jaffna peninsula was replaced. Indian spokesmen denied the report, saying he had returned to Jaffna after a period of "consultations" in New Delhi.

Military analysts here say the main failure was that of the Research and Analysis Wing, India's intelligence agency.

DMK president demands ceasefire

COIMBATORE, Nov. 1.

Only an immediate ceasefire by the Indian Peace-Keeping Force (IPKF) in Jaffna will help resolve the Sri Lankan ethnic problem easily, the DMK president, Mr. M. Karunanidhi has said.

Talking to presspersons, he said an immediate cessation of hostilities and a ceasefire was a "must" and "an appropriate thing" for holding talks and for the LTTE to surrender arms.

Referring to the Indian Government's demand for the LTTE cadres to surrender arms for stopping military action against them, Mr. Karunanidhi said the LTTE men need some arms for self-protection and defence. This matter has to be negotiated and settled. However, irrespective of this issue an immediate ceasefire should be ordered. This alone would help ease the situation and pave the way for an amicable solution.

Mr. Karunanidhi did not know to what extent the press reports on the LTTE leadership seeking a 48-hour ceasefire for surrendering arms is correct. But, he said, a ceasefire should enable the parties to return to their positions as on October 9, when the hostilities began. — Our Staff Reporter

Newsweek

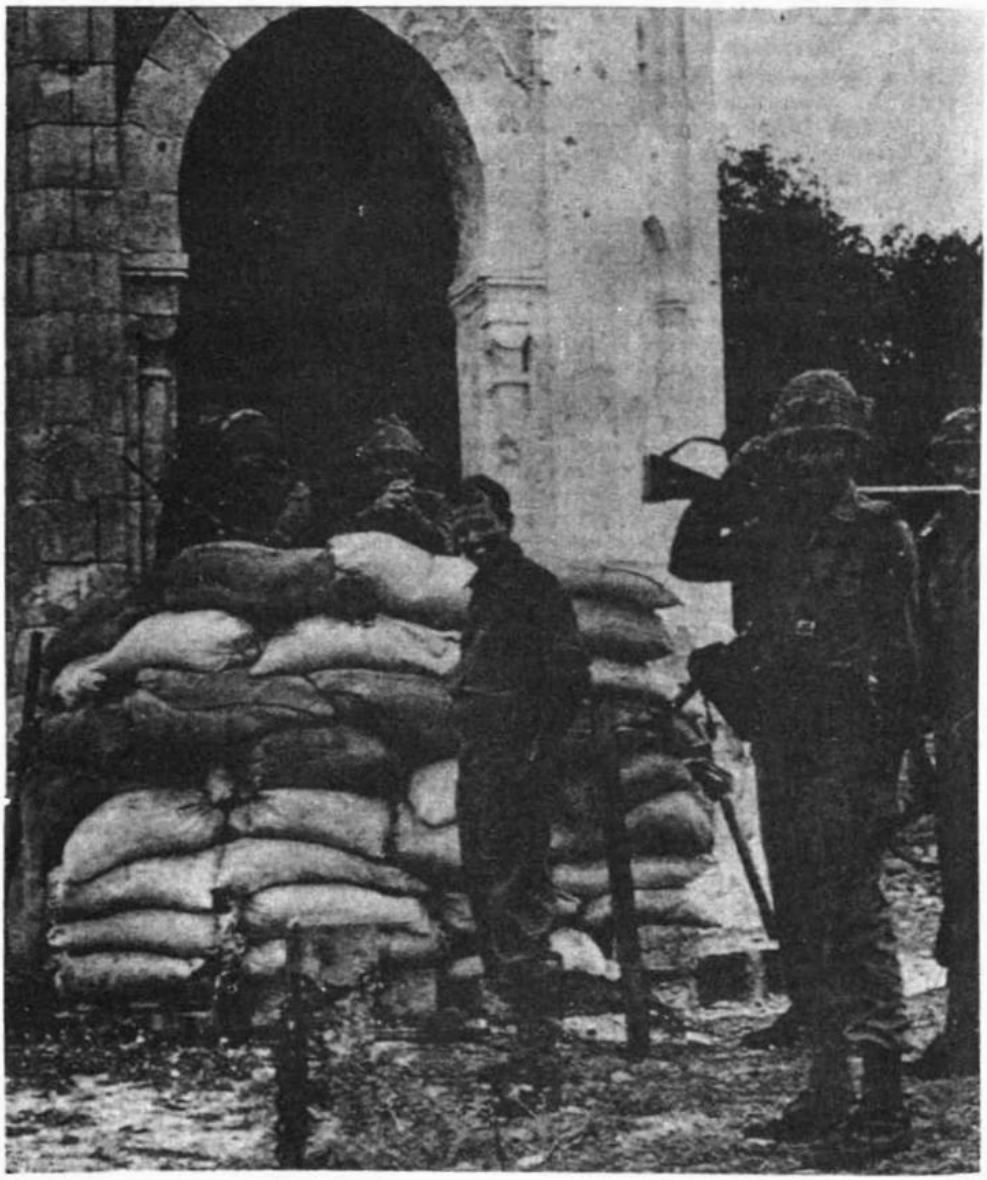
REPORT

India's Quagmire

Sri Lanka's Tamils vow to wage a guerrilla war against the 'peacekeepers'

NOVEMBER 9, 1987

Standing atop the stone parapet of the 17th-century Dutch fort that dominates Jaffna, Brig. Manjit Singh last week described how his Indian peacekeeping troops had just routed the last of Sri Lanka's Tamil guerrillas from the area. As he surveyed the shell-scarred buildings along the city's waterfront, Singh proudly pronounced, "My sector is clear." Suddenly, a burst of gunfire and the thud of exploding mortars broke the spell. "That's not my sector!" the commander interjected. "One of our columns is still fighting two miles away."



India's hard-won capture of Jaffna has proved a hollow victory. As the peacekeeping force closed in on the Tamil stronghold late last month, the Indians allowed the noose to slip; in the final hours of battle some 1,200 fighters of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) escaped to fight another day alongside their incendiary leader, Velupillai Prabakaran. Now Indian soldiers patrol the narrow streets in a perpetual crouch to avoid sniper fire. Booby traps and mines set by a small rear guard of Tamil fighters take a daily toll. In the face of a tattered peace plan, a vengeful band of guerrillas and an increasingly hostile civilian population, India's "peacekeeping" operation now shows every sign of becoming a painful, long-term occupation—one that invites comparison to Ulster and Britain's near 20-year standoff with the Irish Republican Army. "This is not the finale of the war, this is only a battle in a struggle," Anton Balasingham, Prabakaran's senior political adviser, told NEWSWEEK at a safe house on the Jaffna Peninsula. "If India is bent on liquidating us, they will create conditions for a prolonged guerrilla war for which we are prepared."

That's hardly a prospect the Indians foresaw when they began arriving in Sri Lanka three months ago. Then the troops were welcomed as the guarantors of peace, courtesy of President Junius R. Jayewardene and Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. Their vaunted accord promised to end the four-year civil war between Sri Lanka's primarily Buddhist Sinhalese majority and separatist factions of the mostly Hindu Tamil minority. In exchange for the creation of a semiautonomous Tamil "homeland" in the merged Northern and Eastern provinces, the LTTE, the largest and most militant of the separatist organizations, publicly agreed to hand over its weapons to the Indian force. But it's clear now that the plan was built on false hopes and empty promises. The Tigers accepted the terms only under strong pressure from India and never surrendered more than a fraction of their arms. Less than six weeks after the agreement was signed, the Tigers were killing again, and by last month the Indians believed they had no choice but to take Jaffna.

That battle was far tougher than anyone expected, however, and now even the Indian commanders are anticipating a long campaign against an enemy they can neither see nor engage. "If normalcy means riding along streets freely," says Lt. Gen. Depinder Singh, who took direct command over the more than 20,000 Indian troops just three weeks ago, "then it will take a long time to come." The reason, the Indians acknowledge, is that many of the Tigers got away. Those who didn't escape into the

PHOTOS BY ANTHONY SUAU—BLACK STAR

A hollow victory: *Indian troops in occupied Jaffna (left), refugees taking shelter in an old church (above), a young Tamil takes aim*

jungle buried their weapons, changed into civilian clothes and quietly slipped into refugee camps where they became the guests of the Indian government. The Indian Army is trying to screen the camps for LTTE rebels, but without much success.

The Indians should never have been caught so badly off guard. For the last four years, practically until the moment Gandhi ordered his troops across the Palk Strait to Sri Lanka, New Delhi had been the LTTE's patron and protector. Overtly and covertly, India helped arm and supply the Tigers. Support was especially strong in the southern state of Tamil Nadu, home to 50 million ethnic Tamils. There, Chief Minister M. G. Ramachandran, a key ally of Gandhi's, openly allowed the LTTE to run training camps, even as New Delhi officially denied their existence. Despite the many links to the Tamils, however, the Indian peacekeepers seemed genuinely surprised by the size and strength of the Tiger force, and they were completely uninformed about Prabakaran's whereabouts (box). That intelligence blunder apparently led two weeks ago to New Delhi's temporary recall of Maj. Gen. Harkirat Singh, who oversaw the initial assault.

Hit and run: In a full-fledged guerrilla war the advantage will shift further to the side of the Tamils. "We know every inch of this land," said one young militant who was recovering from minor wounds at Jaffna Hospital. "We can hit and escape." The LTTE's military commander, who goes by the name Mahattaya, also escaped the Indian pincers and is said to possess an almost photographic memory of the lush Jaffna Peninsula. He stays on the move, using a walkie-talkie to order his fighters into position for an ambush or out of harm's way, hardly ever bothering to look at a map. Of course the Indian assault on Jaffna did take a toll. In addition to killing several hundred rebel fighters, the Indians dealt the LTTE a psychological blow by denying the Tigers their secure base of operations. The LTTE had grown accustomed to operating in an open, quasi-governmental fashion in Jaffna and must now make the difficult transition to becoming a true guerrilla force.

The Tigers will find help everywhere they turn. After initially welcoming the Indian peacekeepers, Sri Lanka's Tamils have now turned against them with a vengeance. The Indian assault on Jaffna claimed more than 200 civilian lives, and Tamil refugee camps and hospitals are filled with bitter survivors—and unverifiable reports of murders, rapes and pillaging at the hands of the Indian troops. (One 14-year-old girl named Kalla has become a near legend among Tamils since she is said to have electronically detonated a land mine under an Indian Army convoy near Batticaloa, killing at least 20 Indian soldiers.)

Inside Jaffna's war-damaged hospital last week, the wards were overflowing with civilian wounded. One young woman whose right leg had been amputated said she had been shot by Indian soldiers who had fired into a crowd of civilians. Nearby, another woman fanned away the flies from the blood-soaked bandage covering the wound where doctors had amputated the foot of her nine-year-old daughter. Next to them lay her four-year-old son, hit by shrapnel on his back and legs. The mother pulled out the death certificate of her third child, an eight-year-old boy who had been killed when an Indian artillery shell hit their refugee camp. "The Tigers may have indulged in violence, but they are our boys," said an elderly Tamil man tending his wounded son. "The Indians are aliens in our land."

Helicopter attack: The Indians have indeed shown that they are prepared to go to extremes to put down the Tigers. Last week New Delhi acknowledged that its forces had used Soviet-built Mi-24 helicopter gunships to attack an LTTE stronghold east of Jaffna in the city of Chavakachcheri. India reported that 27 rebel fighters had died in the attack, but Indian journalists who visited the scene reported seeing the bodies of at least 20 civilians in the smoldering marketplace. At the weekend Indian troops surrounded a Hindu temple on the eastern outskirts of Jaffna, where as many as 8,000 refugees were camped. The Indian Army suspected that dozens of well-armed Tiger guerrillas were inside the temple and that the area had been mined. They were reluctant to storm the temple, however, for fear of causing more civilian casualties and of further alienating the Tamils.

Against those kinds of odds the Indian peacekeepers will have a tough time winning back much support. The Indian Army is embarking on a hearts-and-minds campaign to convince Tamil civilians it can be

trusted to provide for the community by running the hospitals, feeding refugees, restoring electricity and restoring the peace. "We are bringing succor and security," says Maj. Gen. Amarjit Singh Kalkat, somewhat optimistically. "Once the people feel we are here and will remain here to look after them, then this [trouble] will go away."

Gandhi won considerable praise at home for his statesmanship at the time of the Sri Lankan accord, but public opinion is beginning to turn against him—though the anticipated backlash among Indian Tamils has not occurred. More than 200 Indian soldiers have been killed or have been reported missing during the occupation, and many Indians have yet to be convinced that the results are worth that price. Moreover, the military operation is costing New Delhi more than $3 million a day, a hefty sum in a resource-strapped country already suffering the strains of a severe drought. "If military casualties continue to rise at the present alarming rate," editorialized the daily Statesman, "there is a distinct possibility that more and more Indians will begin to question the logic of sacrificing the lives of our *jawans* [soldiers] in a foreign adventure whose main purpose seems to be to shore up Mr. Rajiv Gandhi's sagging domestic fortunes."

And what of the July peace accord? For all practical purposes it appears dead. Last week Jayewardene said that although provincial council elections would be held as scheduled throughout the island in December, there would be no voting in the Northern or Eastern provinces until peace is achieved. Nor will the government ap-

The Roar of the Liberation Tigers

Velupillai Prabakaran may not be a household name elsewhere, but in Sri Lanka he has become the stuff of legend. He is the wily guerrilla leader whose outnumbered Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) bloodied the Indian Army in Jaffna, then slipped away to fight again another day. He is a strict disciplinarian who neither smokes nor drinks. He wears a magnum revolver, and once kept a leopard cub as a pet. He has slipped past police and soldiers many times—once disguised as a Catholic priest, another time as a peanut vendor. For inspiration he likes to watch Clint Eastwood video cassettes. He is a 33-year-old family man with two small children, but he is also addicted to the sound of gunfire. But above all, Prabakaran is a man obsessed by a dream: to carve out an independent Tamil state in Sri Lanka.

Hit squad: In pursuit of that dream, Prabakaran turned to political violence at an early age. Born in Velvettithurai, a fishing town on Sri Lanka's northern coast, he grew up burning with outrage over the discrimination Tamils had to endure in Sri Lanka's Sinhalese-dominated society. He dropped out of school and became a militant Tamil separatist. In 1973 he fled to India, one jump ahead of Sri Lankan police. But in 1975 he returned home and—at the age of 21—led a three-man hit squad that assassinated the mayor of Jaffna. Prabakaran took over the Tamil Tigers, and by 1983 had molded them into a tough and disciplined fighting force ready for battle. That year, on July 23, he and a group of his guerrillas ambushed a Sri Lankan military convoy in the Jaffna Peninsula. The Tigers killed 13 soldiers. Prabakaran, it is said, personally cut down nine of them with his machine gun.

BALDEV—SYGMA

The stuff of legend: *Prabakaran at a Tamil rally in Jaffna*

The convoy ambush caused a quantum leap in Sri Lanka's ethnic conflict. Outraged by the killings, Sri Lanka's Sinhalese went on a rampage all across the country. In Colombo alone, Sinhalese mobs killed more than 300 Tamil men, women and children. The anti-Tamil violence gave Prabakaran a pretext to declare an all-out guerrilla war in defense of his own people. But he had no intention of allowing any separatist group other than his own Tamil Tigers to lead the struggle in the name of Tamil Eelam, the Tamil state he hopes one day to establish. Prabakaran has targeted his rivals as ruthlessly as he has the Sinhalese. A year ago Prabakaran's Tigers killed more than 100 rival militants, then paraded the bodies through Jaffna as a warning to other potential challengers. And even after the Indian-sponsored peace treaty was signed last July, the LTTE killed scores more rivals in order to establish absolute Tiger supremacy in the administrative areas proposed in the agreement.

Those who know him maintain that Prabakaran has no political ideology. He sometimes mouths Marxist jargon, and admires Fidel Castro and Che Guevara. But at heart he is a freedom fighter—not a revolutionary. The ideology that drives him is little more than the dream of becoming the father of a new country, the independent state of Tamil Eelam. How he would govern such a state is far from clear. "Prabakaran is not politically astute and doesn't have a detailed grasp of Tamil aspirations or how to achieve them politically," one Tamil source says. "He's only interested in the big picture: how to establish Tamil Eelam."

New lease: Indian officials blame Prabakaran for the breakdown of the Indo-Sri Lankan peace accord arranged last summer by India's Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. "He had it within his power to give momentum to the process of bringing peace and normalcy," says an Indian diplomat. "But he didn't deliver. If he hadn't been unreasonable, we could have avoided this terrible tragedy." The Indian offensive against Jaffna gave Prabakaran a new lease as a guerrilla leader. "He couldn't play the institutional, diplomatic game with any success," says a Tamil source in Colombo. "But now he's doing what he knows best—fighting." Somewhere in Sri Lanka, Prabakaran and 1,200 survivors of the Jaffna siege are still at large. Sooner or later, they are bound to strike another blow for Tamil Eelam.

ANGUS DEMING *with* RON MOREAU *in Colombo and* SUDIP MAZUMDAR *in New Delhi*

AFP

A hasty retreat: *Cache of rebel bombs*

point interim councils in those provinces—in part, say moderate Tamils, because the LTTE would almost certainly [illegible] any one who cooperated with the Colombo government. "It would be political and literal suicide for a Tamil to accept a seat," says Neelan Tiruchelvam, a leading Tamil moderate. Jayewardene's Sinhalese supporters have been under attack as well—literally. In the last two months Sinhalese nationalist extremists have killed more than 50 party officials and activists who supported the ruling United National Party. Nevertheless, Jayewardene is pressing Parliament to approve the eventual implementation of the peace accord even though peace itself remains—at least for now—beyond reach.

Whatever the Sri Lankans do, India may already have plunged itself into a military and political quagmire. At its current strength, the peacekeeping force would have little chance of defeating the Tigers in guerrilla combat—particularly without civilian support. "You can never really win such a war," mused one Indian officer last week. "It has to be fought politically." But if the Indians allow domestic pressures to force them out, they risk driving Sri Lanka back into the vortex of civil war—perhaps on a much deadlier scale. As Gandhi is now learning, it's dangerous business to get involved in a neighbor's war, and India may be looking for a way out of Sri Lanka for a long time to come.

WILLIAM B[illegible] *with* RON MOREAU *and* WILLIA[illegible] GOWAN *in Jaffna,* MERVYN D[illegible]LVA *in Colombo and* SUDIP M[illegible]MDAR *in New Delhi*

CIVILIANS □ KILLED (Operation Pawan)

S. Maheswari 1.11.87 | Sasi Kala 2.11.87
Colin 3.11.87 | S. Kandiah 3.11.87 | Lilli Raja 3.11.87
Mahendraraj 3.11.87 | Navaratnam 3.11.87 | Priyanti 3.11.87
P. Ramanathan 3.11.87 | A. Santhana Raja 3.11.87 | Suresh 3.11.87
K. Nataraja 4.11.87 | K. Nishanthan 4.11.87 | M. Paramalingam 4.11.87
T. Sinnathambi 5.11.87 | Parvathi Pillai 5.11.87 | S. Guhadasan 6.11.87

AFFIDAVIT

KARUNANIDHI CHANDRAKUMAR. (17) C/o V. Sivarajah, Chettiavoor, Thondamanar

The deceased person Sellappah Karunanidhi was my father.

He was working as a casual labourer.

My mother committed suicide when I was six years old.

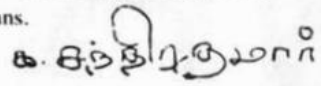
I have a brother named Chandramohan, aged 15 years.

My father used to go to Atchuvely due to his work often and to stay there for many days.

On 5.1.88 I was informed that my father was shot and killed by the army at Atchuvely on 1.11.87.

I also learned that my father's body was burnt by the army itself.

Now we have been rendered orphans.



NAVARATNAM KUNAMANI (33) Veerasingham Veethy, Meesalai South, Meesalai.

The deceased Manickam Navaratnam age 35 years was my husband.

He was employed as a Casual Labourer.

Due to the October-November military offensive we went to Masar as refugees.

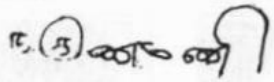
On 1.11.87 my husband was arrested by the army.

After about ten days I was informed he was shot and killed by the army at Maruthankerni bridge on 1.11.87.

Some relatives who found the body after three days buried it on the spot.

I have four children.

My children and I have been deprived of the maintenance and support we received from my husband.



VISVALINGAM SRIKALA (14) Silambupuliady, Chankanai.

The deceased person Vaithilinagm Visvalingam aged 56 years was my father.

He was a casual labourer.

During the October-November 1987 military offensive we sought refuge at the Silambupuliyady Vairavar temple.

On 1.11.87 at about 4.30 a.m. a shell fell in front of the temple and exploded.

My father who was struck by shrapnels died on the spot.

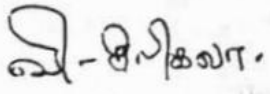
His body was cremated at the Vilaveli Cemetery on 2.11.87

I have a sister and a brother.

I am a student.

After my father's death we do not have any income and undergoing untold hardships.

Our mother died three years ago.



CHANTHIRAKUMARI widow of Nagarajah, 3rd Mile Post, Manipay Road, Anaikottai.

The deceased Rathinakkurukal Puvaneswariammah, aged 63 was my husband's mother.

She was living with me and looked after me and my children after the death of my late husband R. Nagarajah.

On 2nd November, 1987, early morning my husband's mother and some other left the camp to purchase some provisions for me and my children. Some time later I heard some gun shot firing.

After some time a neighbour of my house came and told me that my husband's mother R. Puvaneswariammah was shot by IPKF and died laying on the road, at Annaikettai Junction. Due to shock and fear I rushed to spot found her laying dead, at Anaikottai Junction.

Consequent to her irreparable loss. I was chocked and have not recovered from the shock. Since after her demise I am ill and undergoing treatment.

After the death of my husband, my husband's mother was the only chief mainstay of the family. Now I find it very difficult to support myself and my children.

KANDIAH RASAMMAH (59) Thalayadi West, Tirunelveli.

The deceased person Kanapathy Suppar aged 75 years was my father.

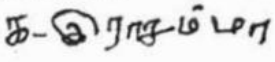
He was living with us until fate took him away.

Due to the October 1987 military offensive I fled to Vaddukoddai with my two daughters.

My father and my husband refused to accompany us and opted to stay behind to look after our house and property.

On 2.11.87 I was informed that my father and my husband were both killed on 26.10.87 in a shell blast while they were going towards the Thirunelvely Sivan Temple with the intention of taking refuge.

I came to know that their bodies were cremated by some person who discovered their bodies in a barren field on 27.10.87.



RAMASAMY THEVARASA (30) Silambu Puliyadi, Chankanai.

My late daughter Thevarasa Sasikala, aged 7 years was a grade one student attending the Sivapragasiam Maha Vidiyalayam Chankanai.

From the early hours of 2.11.87 our village was subjected to heavy shelling. Fearing to remain at home the members of my family and the family of my sister Thembamalar fled towards the Silambu Piliyadi Pillayar Temple at 4.15 a.m.

My daughter Sasikala and my brother-in-law Sivanandarasa who were going ahead of us were both hit by shells as they entered the precincts of the temple.

My daughter was grievously injured in her right hand while my brother-in-law killed instantaneously.

My daughter Sasikala succumbed to her injuries as I was taking her to Dr. Naganathan's Hospital at Chankanai.

SIVANANDARAJAH TEMPAMALAR (35) Sillambupuliyadi, Chankanai.

My late husband Manickam Sivanandarajah, aged 33 years was due to leave for Saudi Arabia.

On 2.11.87 from the early hours of the day our village was subjected to heavy shelling.

At about 4.15 a.m. the same day when we were fleeing towards the Vairavar Temple for safety accompanied by my brother and his family a shell fell close by and burst.

My husband Manickam Sivanandarajah was hit and killed instantaneously.

My brother's daughter Thevarasan Sasikala, aged 7 years who was injured succumbed to her injuries when being taken to the Hospital.

My husband's dead body and that of my brother's daughter were cremated at Chankanai the same day.

I have one son aged 3 years.

THILLIAMPALAM SUBRAMANIAM (60) Yarwathai Kopay North, Kopay.

The deceased Kanthia Thangammah (78) was my mother-in-law.

On 2.11.87 a shell fell on our house and exploded. My mother-in-law died on the spot due to the blast.

We removed her body from the spot and cremated in a clearance away from our house.

The deceased is survived by her husband who is around 90 years old.

Our house was completely gutted due to the shell blast. We lost all our belonging which includes our farm proceeds.

THIRUNAVUKARASU SELVAMANI. (32) Silambupuliady, Chankanai.

The deceased Thirunavakarasu Nishakumar, aged 9 years was my son.

He was a student.

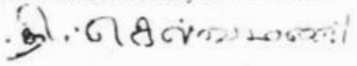
On 2.11.87 at about 8 a.m we fled from our house due to the intensive military operation with the hope of taking refuge at the Silambupuliady Vairava Temple.

When I reached the temple with my other children I noticed that my late son was missing.

Later I came to know that he was killed when a shell fell near him and exploded while he was running towards the temple.

His body was cremated on 3.11.87 at Vilaveli cemetery at Chankanai.

I have three children.



PONNUTHURAI PATHMADEVY (30) Kernikarai Alaveddy North, Alaveddy.

The deceased Ponnuthurai Thavarajah, aged 37 years a bachelor was my brother.

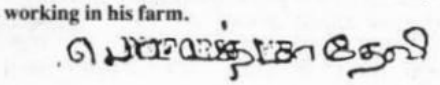
He was a Farmer

After our parents died it was my late brother who supported and maintained me.

On 3.11.1987 at about 6.30 a.m. my brother left home saying that he is going to our farm.

As he did not return home I became highly worried.

As about 5.00 p.m. I was informed that my brother was shot and killed by the army while he was working in his farm.



VALLIPURAM MAHADEVAN (59) Marailluppai, Nedunkerni.

The deceased person Mahadevan Mahendran aged 28 years was my son.

He was a Farmer.

On 3.11.87 at about 3.00 p.m. my son set out in a tractor towards Nedunkerni.

At about 6.00 p.m. I was informed that my son was killed when the tractor he was driving was subjected to shell attack from a helicopter.

I learned few other persons were also perished in the aerial attack.

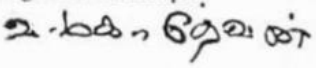
His body was brought home on the same day itself.

His body was cremated at the Morailluppai Village Cemetery on 4.11.87.

I have four unmarried daughters and a son.

It was my late son who bore the burden of looking after our family as I have become old and incapable of doing hard work.

After my son's demise we are undergoing untold hardships.



Mrs. KRISHNAPILLAI PARIMALADEVI (28)

Muthukrishnar Veethy, Chunnakam.

I was married to Kandiah Krishnapillai (28) 11 years back and have 3 children by him aged 10 years, 4 years and the youngest 1½ months.

On 5.11.87 when I was at home with my husband and children sounds of explosion were heard some distance away indicating that shells fired by the IPKF were falling in that area.

At about 10 a.m. the same day when my husband was proceeding towards the well in our compound to have a bath a shell fell close to him and exploded.

When I rushed to my husband I found him dead. My husband had a gaping injury on his neck.

The dead body of my husband was burnt in a barren land in the adjoining areas, the same day with the assistance of relations.

I have been made a widow at this young age and have to bear the burden of providing my children with the basic requirement.

My husband was the sole bread winner and his untimely death has brought untold hardship on me and my 3 children.

ARULLAPU MARY MACTHELENE (65) a widow Navaly South, Navaly.

The deceased person Arulappu Simeson, aged 42 years was my son.

He was a Fisherman.

On 6.11.1987 our area was rocked by explosive shells.

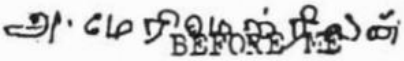
At about 3.00 a.m. my son fled from our house saying that he is going to St. Peters Church.

On the following day at about 6.00 a.m. I was informed that my son was killed when a shell fell inside the Church compound.

His body was brought home immediately.

It was my late son who supported and maintained me.

I do not have any income after his death.



The Telegraph

COMMENT

The fall of Jaffna does not end the war against the LTTE

Nikhil Chakravartty

External affairs minister Natwar Singh is indeed a daring person to have claimed, as he is reported to have done after his sudden air-dash to Colombo, that the worst is over with regard to the Indian Army's overpowering of the resistance of the LTTE in northern Sri Lanka.

By all indications, it is clear as daylight that the storming of the LTTE base in Jaffna town is by no means the end of the bloody story. For no guerrilla force, the fall of the citadel is the end of the armed resistance. Rather it is the beginning of a new phase which may turn out to be advantageous for it.

It needs to be noted that the battle for the Jaffna town does not end the virtual war that the Indian Army is now waging against this Tamil militant group in Sri Lanka. After the Jaffna town, there is the thickly populated Jaffna peninsula to be cleared. Beyond that is the rest of the northern province, and after that the more difficult job of tackling the eastern province with its mixed ethnic composition.

It has taken more than two weeks for the Indian armed forces to capture Jaffna town. This has been done with full-scale military operation. By the candid admission of the officers in charge, most of the LTTE armed cadres and leaders have either escaped from the Indian Army net or have gone into hiding within the four corners of the town to try to harass the Indian Army on a hit-and-run basis.

When the Indian Army was despatched to Jaffna under the nomenclature of a peace-keeping force, what it had to undertake was a full-scale military operation, no question of peace-keeping as done by a police force. Now after the capture of Jaffna town with heavy casualties and fairly expensive destruction of property, there has come disturbing reports—one of the first by the plucky correspondent of **The Telegraph** —that the Indian Army has now been using helicopter gunships to bomb out other towns and habitations which it suspects to be LTTE nests. This way, the Indian Army instead of slowing down its military operation after the capture of Jaffna, seems to have stepped them up. In the bargain, it seems to be taking the risk of higher civilian casualty.

What does it really imply? The Indian authorities seem to have no idea whatsoever how to isolate the LTTE. The civilian population that has had to face Indian Army attacks including straffing from the air, would certainly not be heartened by its presence in the Tamil provinces. Rather, the Tamil population in the area would be hardened in its bitterness against the Indian Army.

One also hears nowadays in official circles that efforts would now be made to activate the other Tamil militant groups so that the LTTE could be isolated. Hasn't this job been thought of rather late in the day? All these months, the approach of the Indian authorities was that the other militant groups did not matter and the LTTE alone would have to be talked to. Then suddenly in the second week of October, a full-scale military operation was mounted against it. Of course, the plea trotted out by the Indian authorities from the Prime Minister downward has been that the LTTE broke every promise it made.

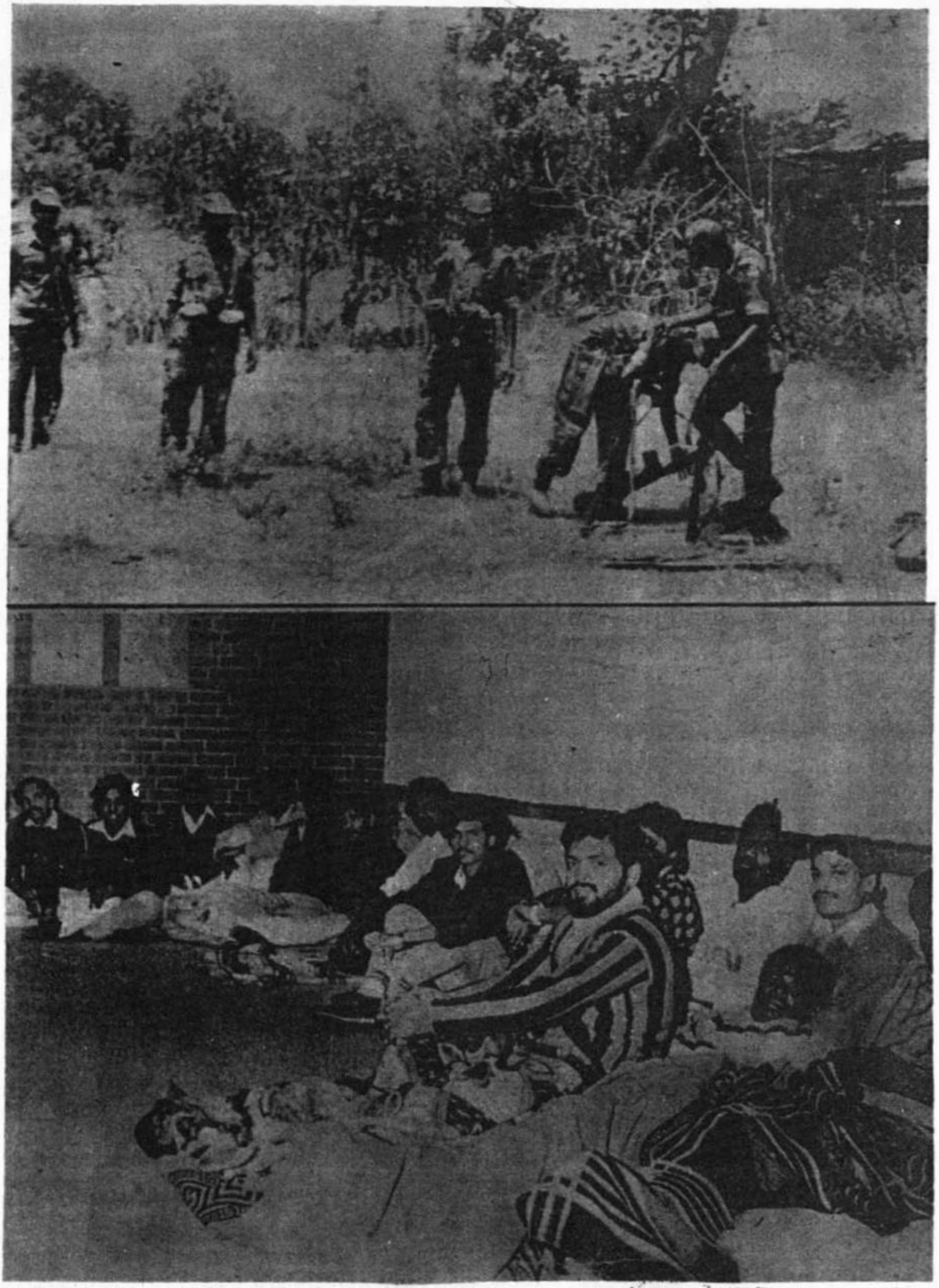
The question that the Indian authorities owe to the public is: all these months and years, what sort of intelligence appraisal was being made about the LTTE strength and attitude? Compare this with the meticulous work done at the time of the Bangladesh operation. Mukti Bahini groups also were not easy to handle, but the political leadership in the government at the time was mature enough to handle them with care.

The perspective before the Indian Army in Sri Lanka is fearsome. The scope of conventional positional operation is minimal: instead, it will have to grapple with full-scale guerrilla attacks by a determined, well-armed group, well-entrenched in the support of the local population. The fall of Jaffna town need not have crushed the morale of the LTTE. It is a determined unflinching do-or-die group, ready with the cyanide. Had the Indian authorities made a serious assessment of this type of adversaries to contend with, they would have realised the enormity of the disaster in which our armed forces are pushed into.

What is bizarre is that a Tamil militant group is now marked out as the adversary of the government of India, while the Jayewardene government has become its closest ally for whom our jawans are facing risks of a serious magnitude.

If the authorities in New Delhi pause and seriously ponder they would find it difficult to answer honestly a simple question: for whom are our jawans shedding their blood in the inhospitable terrain of Jaffna and beyond? For guarding the frontiers of India? For carving out a greater India beyond our frontiers? For propping up a tottering regime in a neighbouring country? For whom?

Such a question needs to be answered honestly before the country is dragged further into this misadventure.



Tamilen aus dem Kreis Goslar: Hungerstreik im St.-Annen-Haus.

MONTAG, 2. NOVEMBER 1987

SUNDAY

The war for

REPORT

With the Tamil Tigers putting up stiff resistance, will the Indian Peace-keeping Force be able to gain control of Jaffna and ultimately restore peace and normalcy in Sri Lanka?

(Top) IPKF arms set off from Palaly: tough going

LTTE supremo Pirabhakaran: never-say-die

The operation was swift and businesslike, but hopelessly restrained. The Indian Peace-keeping Force (IPKF) charged with the responsibility of salvaging a collapsing accord, threw a noose around Jaffna and proceeded to tighten it. By 20 October, it was consolidating its position in west Jaffna, joining up with a group of soldiers beleaguered in Jaffna Fort, cutting off the LTTE's (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) Jaffna lagoon where they had stored arms and ammunition earlier. Finally, the IPKF was advancing on Jaffna from five different directions.

Once the Indian Navy had destroyed several 'supply boats' in the LTTE

peace

George Frans Scott

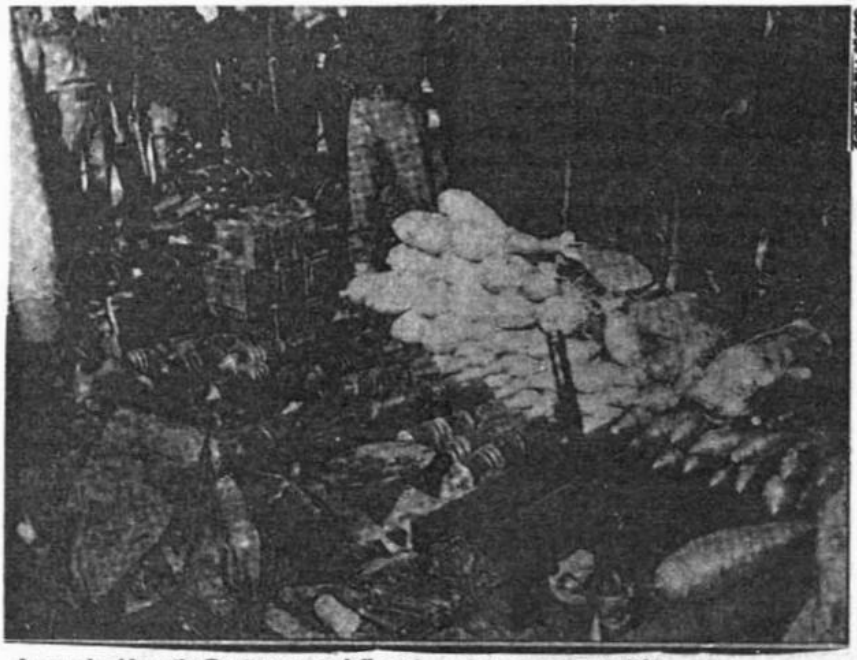
India has got herself into a difficult situation. The attempt to implement the 29 July agreement has not only brought the IPKF at loggerheads with the Tamil militants, but also exposed it to vicious slander from Sinhalese quarters

stronghold of Gurunagar, the IPKF flew in 300 more troops to start mopping up operations. The Tigers then switched from conventional warfare to guerrilla tactics, sniping at IPKF troops from buildings and laying booby traps and mines in their way. The battle, even in its final stages, was fierce and bloody. And even though the IPKF was avoiding the use of offensive artillery and air support, it could not prevent the increasing toll being taken on civilian lives: by 22 October, the fighting had left 300 citizens dead, and some 500 injured. The IPKF itself had lost 100 of its men, while 500 others were wounded—several of whom were flown to the military hospital in Pune. Nevertheless, the Indian forces pressed on relentlessly, refusing to suspend hostilities unless the LTTE surrendered unconditionally and agreed to abide by the 29 July accord. Noticing that several LTTE guerrillas wanted to end their resistance, the Indian forces even offered a general amnesty to all those who surrendered. But the LTTE leader, Vellupillai Pirabhakaran, who had himself escaped and was directing the battle from afar, was clearly determined to make his men fight to the bitter end.

The irony is inescapable. Once regarded as a patron and benefactor of the Tamil militants, India, having committed itself to a treaty with Sri Lanka, now finds itself in the role of a peacekeeper fighting Sri Lanka's war against its own friends. And with the LTTE resisting dourly, there is another fear: will the war against the insurgents come to an early end, or will it spill over into Tamil Nadu, where the Tigers might take their fight for an Eelam (Tamil homeland)? "Only in that event," said a foreign ministry official, "does the question of having any regrets arise, not otherwise. And from all indications, it seems the problem will be settled." One will have to wait and watch. But by the third week of October, there were rumours that the Indian army had suffered more casualties against the LTTE in Sri Lanka than it had in Bangladesh in 1971, and also that a number of senior Indian military officials were against sending the army into the island nation with its hands tied. Is this war proving too high a price to pay for statesmanship and diplomacy? Has India bitten off more than it can chew?

Apparently, during the fighting, the LTTE had sent a letter to the Prime Minister, through the DMK leader in Madras, M. Karunanidhi. The Tigers would like to surrender but insisted that their political differences with the Indian government must be settled through negotiation. An LTTE commander in Jaffna had sent a note to the IPKF, on the same lines. But the IPKF stood firm—the surrender had to be unconditional. Soon after this, the IPKF learnt, by intercepting radio communication between LTTE units, that a debate was going on about how long to continue the fight. While the IPKF claimed that the Tigers were debating the question of surrender, travellers from Jaffna who spoke to journalists in Colombo said their actual objective was somehow to slip out of Jaffna and continue the struggle in other places. The IPKF, however, took this opportunity to drop leaflets all over Jaffna, appealing to the militants to surrender, and assuring them that if they did so, they would be able to participate fully in the democratic and political process and live with honour and dignity.

"This is not a war," said a government official in Delhi, "so the question of negotiating a cease-fire does not arise. It is an operation to disarm the Tamil militants, and stop the violence. The LTTE has brought it upon itself." On 14 and 16 October, Indian government spokesmen, in response to the reports saying that Pirabhakaran has sent a letter to Karunanidhi, reiterated Rajiv Gandhi's statement that he still hoped that the LTTE will join the process of ensuring the restoration of peace and normalcy and help secure the legitimate



Arms seized from the Tamil Tigers in Jaffna: clampdown on secessionists

demands of the Tamils of Sri Lanka rather than pursue the goal of self-aggrandisement. But there was no response from the other side.

The IPKF used the conventional "pincer movement" strategy employed for any large settlement. They approached Jaffna from all sides, sealed off the escape routes and linked up their columns. But, as an official pointed out, their advance into Jaffna was hindered by their inability to "soften" up their route with air strikes and artillery shelling. The LTTE, on the other hand, initially defended their bunkers, but later retreated to housetops and within buildings, from where they sniped at advancing IPKF troops. Then they would run ahead, laying mines (many of which were electronically controlled) in their wake.

Once they gave up their battlements—from where they had used sophisticated shoulder-to-shoulder rockets, steel-capped bullets, AK-47 assault rifles, mortars and heavy guns—they merged with the rest of the population. "The main problem Indian soliders are facing," said a government official, "is that the LTTE guerrillas wear ordinary clothes. When the IPKF orders people out of a building, the militants usually come out without their arms, leaving them in some safe place, to be collected later. The jawans are helpless. The point is that the people of Jaffna are not our enemies."

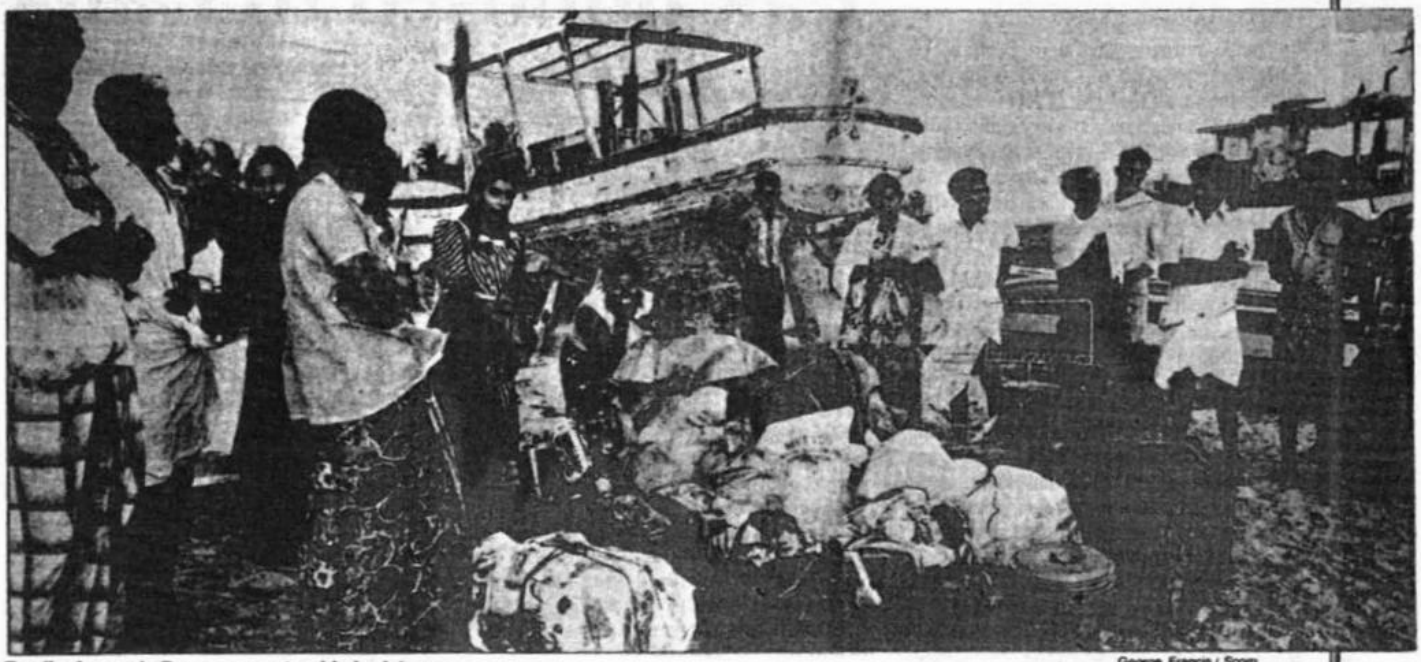
Not only were the militants merging with the population, they were also taking advantage of the Indian forces' inability to strike at civilian targets. As the IPKF linked up their columns from Navatkuli and Jaffna Fort—a major advance—and established their hold on all major buildings in Jaffna, the militants started using women and children as shields to attack them from behind. The Indians, however, managed to take the LTTE headquarters in Koppai North, and later Koppai South, thus getting near the famous Nallur temple in the outskirts of the town. 40,000 Tamils had taken refuge here and the LTTE boss, Velupillai Pirabhakaran was also rumoured to be hiding within. The LTTE, in order to discredit the Indian forces, gave out stories that its soliders had assaulted and raped Tamil women, and shelled civilian targets near Jaffna Hospital. An inquiry into these charges is currently going on, though the IPKF spokesmen have called them "blatant lies".

Once regarded as a patron and benefactor of the Tamil militants, India, having committed itself to a treaty with Sri Lanka, now finds itself in the role of a peacekeeper fighting Sri Lanka's war against its own friends

However, the militants managed to hold out against the Indian assault much longer than expected. On 23 October, fierce house-to-house fighting was still going on in Jaffna where the LTTE continued to resist the IPKF assault using civilian hideouts. The Indians being unfamiliar with the streets and by-lanes of the town, found it hard to deal with the hit-and-run tactics of the guerrillas. Said a a government official, "Jaffna is not Calcutta or Delhi. The IPKF is out in the open. It does not know who is who—even though Jaffna is just a small town." And if the Indian troops were under strict orders to avoid hurting ordinary people, the Tamil militants were callous and ruthless: they blew up a bus carrying Tamil citizens, escorted by IPKF personnel, killing mostly Tamils. In another incident, the militants set off a landmine under a truck carrying IPKF personnel in Thannamullai, in eastern Batticaloa, killing 20 soliders. Five other Indian soldiers were burnt alive by placing blazing car tyres around their necks in Jaffna. The IPKF learnt about this incident by intercepting a radio message in which the guerrillas said, "We are frying the Indians." No further confirmation, however, was available.

Had the IPKF miscalculated the strength of the LTTE? According to an Indian official, the IPKF had gone into Jaffna fully aware of the difficulties of dealing with an enemy that was largely invisible. It is possible, of course, that they had gathered some intelligence about the LTTE's fortifications, not only from the Sinhalese forces but also from splinter Tamil groups which have fallen out with Pirabhakaran and his men. The use of women and children to launch attacks and counterattacks on IPKF positions had made the guerrillas lose a lot of sympathy within their own community in Sri Lanka. The locals started cooperating with the Indians, instead. Some of the Tamil groups are already gunning for the LTTE. "The LTTE has engaged in wanton killings of fellow Tamils and mercilessly bumped off rival groups," said one official. He also pointed out that the LTTE had endangered the lives of the more numerous Tamil population living outside the northern and eastern provinces, who are extremely vulnerable to Sinhalese attacks. So far, even though the Tamils had butchered the Sinhalese in Jaffna, the Sinhalese in other regions have not reacted.

In spite of all roads in Jaffna being sealed, an exodus of 1,25,000 Tamils



Tamil refugees in Rameswaran: troubled existence

George Francis / Scop

preceded the military action. 25,000 of them were accommodated in camps inside the country, and a lakh outside the country. Inside Jaffna, the IPKF has been providing regular medical aid and assistance to the population, as well as airdropping food packets. While wounded IPKF soliders have been brought to military hospitals in India, sick and wounded Tamils have been accommodated in Jaffna Hospital.

No doubt, India has got herself into a difficult situation. The attempt to implement the 29 July agreement has not only brought the IPKF at loggerheads with the Tamil militants, but also exposed it to vicious slander from Sinhalese quarters. In any event, India is now committed to intervening if there is any conflagration. Apart from the costly military operation it has had to conduct, the IPKF now faces the onerous task of either bending or breaking the Tamil Tigers. But can the LTTE be wished away, even if it is temporarily defeated? Even today, many hope that the LTTE will surrender its weapons to the IPKF and join the search for a political solution to the ethnic problem. That represents the brightest hope for peace. The LTTE, after all, has to be recognised as an important political factor in the northern and eastern provinces. As long as Tamils remain part of Sri Lanka's political set-up, the Tigers will be an influential group. But what are the availabe choices if the militant faction, committed as it is to Eelam, is set on a course of self-destruction?

Is the Indo-Sri Lankan accord collapsing? If the accord had ever given rise to any illusions about India bringing about a quick solution to the ethnic tangle in Sri Lanka, they have now evaporated. At the time of writing, it had become amply clear that even the capture of Jaffna would not end the battle. Instead, it would mark the beginning of a long Indian involvement in Sri Lanka—depending on the political situation there. The fact that Sirimavo Bandarnaike's Freedom Party and other Sinhalese groups are virulently opposed to the agreement does not augur well for its longevity. But that is another matter.

It is clear that the militants will not give in. The LTTE, still rigid about not surrendering its arms, is reluctant to accept the Indo-Sri Lankan agreement *in toto*, and its cadres might spread out into the surrounding jungles, and creeks and lagoons to carry on a protracted war of attrition—which is precisely what the IPKF is trying to avoid. And if Tamil militancy continues, it might become harder to control the southern Sinhalese extremist elements, spearheaded by the banned Janata Vimukti Peramuna (JVP), which has already become active again, after the signing of the agreement. The JVP, apart from killing and injuring members of the ruling United National Party in the southern districts, has been raiding Sri Lankan army camps in a drive to collect arms. President Jayewardene has himself said that he feared the JVP and Tamil extremists had established convenient links, and that they were determined to overthrow the Sri Lankan government and set up one of their own. "Guerrillas, with their commitment," said a political observer, "rightly or wrongly, are never obliterated, they spawn and proliferate."

The IPKF used the conventional "pincer movement" strategy employed for any large settlement. They approached Jaffna from all sides, sealed off the escape routes and linked up their columns

The ethnic situation is confusing and volatile. Apparently, there are various national and international forces at play. The international powers which have been applauding the Indo-Sri Lankan agreement are said to be none too happy about India's re-emergence as a regional superpower, and are anxious to see that the accord does not succeed. Within Sri Lanka, the cynicism is confined to the Freedom Party, influential sections of the Buddhist clergy and a cross-section of the Sinhalese people. Some members of the ruling UNP are constantly whipping up anti-Indian feelings by criticising the IPKF's presence and playing up the fact that it poses a serious threat to Sri

Lanka's sovereignty.

These critics—who are counting on Sinhalese pride to push and prod their case—maintain that the IPKF first sided with the Tamils, and is now taking much too long to accomplish its task in Jaffna. In an interview with the daily, *Island*, Mrs Bandaranaike said: "... Reports do not indicate an overwhelming success by the IPKF. I do not think that one of the biggest armies in the world would run into so much difficulty against terrorists who, in the estimation of Mr Dixit (the Indian high commissioner) himself, had only 30 per cent of their weapons." She went on: "Now that the Indian army has launched an offensive in the north and many Indians have died, they will not leave without getting what they came here for." She said it was not for nothing that Indian forces had brought with them armoured cars, anti-aircraft guns, field guns and powerful tanks.

The Sri Lanka government itself is hopelessly divided on this issue. Apart from President Jayewardene, the agreement seems to have more opponents than well-wishers. The recent statement by Prime Minister Premadasa, who, to the astonishment of Indian representatives had accused India of nurturing the Tamil guerrillas, and the manner in which the Indian and Sri Lankan governments have been contradicting each other on the question of granting amnesty to Pirabhakaran and other LTTE guerrillas, are not very encouraging signs either. While the IPKF has assured all members of the LTTE that they will be free men if they surrender, the Sri Lankan government has put a high price on Pirabhakaran's head—though it is said he will never be captured alive, because he has decided to swallow cyanide, like some of his LTTE colleagues, if the enemy gets anywhere near him.

The real test of the Indo-Sri Lankan accord will be now. Will the IPKF outlive its utility for the people of Sri Lanka? Or will the Sri Lankan government use it for purposes other than that for which it was brought in? The ethnic strife is unlikely to end soon. Already, it has caused extraordinary damage to the country: the losses in terms of destruction of public buildings and railway tracks, as well as the total collapse of certain important sectors and roads amounts to an estimated 15 billion Sri Lanka rupees. The island nation's agrarian economy has been greatly affected.

For India, the stakes are political credibility and goodwill; for Sri Lanka, sheer survival. Will the 29 July accord live to see a happier day?

Nirmal Mitra / New Delhi 1—7 November 1987

Pak opposed to Lanka accord, says Rajiv

New Delhi, Nov. 11 (UNI): Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi tonight said that the opposition to the Indo-Sri Lanka peace agreement had come from two quarters — Pakistan and some political parties at home.

Pakistan had vehemently opposed the accord at the Kathmandu SAARC summit because it knew what had been achieved, Mr. Gandhi said, and pointing to the opposition benches, he remarked: "You are criticising (the accord) because you have not understood its significance."

He denied the opposition charge that India had gone round seeking certificate on the accord in international forums. The recognition, in fact, had come without India's asking, he added.

Mr. Gandhi was giving clarifications (sought by members in the Rajya Sabha) on his statement concerning his foreign tour.

Earlier, DMK member V. Gopalasamy warned the House that "seeds of disintegration" will be sown in the country if the killings of Tamils continued.

The Indian Peace-Keeping Force must pull back to the Oct. 9 position so that killings are ended and a ceasefire declared forthwith, Mr. Gopalasamy thundered while initiating a discussion.

Mounting a scathing attack on Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, he accused the Government of India of "betraying" the interests of Tamils. "This unkindest cut of all has come from the most unexpected quarter (India)."

He urged the Prime Minister to substantiate the charges he had levelled against the LTTE and its commander, V. Prabhakaran.

The LTTE was never a party to the agreement signed between Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Jayewardene. Till date the Government of India had not clarified this point.

Mr. Gopalasamy's charge that the IPKF has committed "genocide", as per press reports, sparked angry protests from the treasury benches.

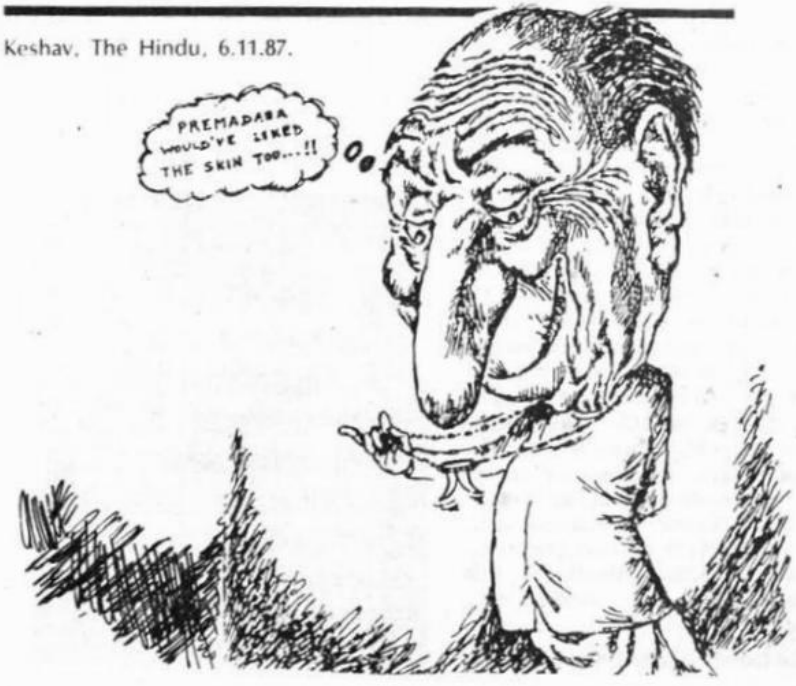
Several opposition members, including Mr. T.R. Balu (DMK), came to the rescue of Mr. Gopalasamy as ruling party members protested.

Minister of State for External Affairs Natwar Singh was on his feet saying that Mr. Gopalasamy should withdraw his remark.

Mr. Gopalasamy: I will not.

Mr. Gopalasamy said the suicide incident involving high-ranking LTTE leaders triggered the militant group's confrontation with the IPKF.

Keshav, The Hindu, 6.11.87.



Rajiv's politics of accords

KULDIP NAYAR

In a recent interview, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi claimed that the various accords that he signed have brought peace to the country. And he took the credit for taking the initiatives in effecting and implementing them. But he has been successful only in as far as signing the accords; most of them have not been implemented at all. In fact, he has made matters worse; the loss of his credibility is such that the general impression is that he does not mean what he says.

Take, for instance, the Sri Lanka accord. By twisting the arms of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), India brought peace which was only a shortlived one. The LTTE chief, V. Pirabhakaran, was not in favour of the accord and when he agreed to it, it was a means to an end, not the end itself. Rajiv Gandhi saw all the virtues in the accord, even though some people warned him of the hazards which went with it. It is said that once when Edward Kennedy, the then US President, sought the advice of the late Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, on what he should do in Vietnam, Nehru had told him not to send the forces as it could amount to America creating a bottleneck for itself.

From a contingent of 6,000 soldiers—which constituted the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) when the accord was signed—the strength has now risen to 10,000 men, one division, backed by tanks. More soldiers may have to be sent in the near future. Sure enough, the outcome is hardly positive. All the bad name that Colombo got for its soldiers' punitive action against the militants in Jaffna and elsewhere will now come to New Delhi.

The Punjab accord was said to be Rajiv Gandhi's first major breakthrough after winning the polls in 1985. But not even a single clause of the accord has been implemented. When Rajiv Gandhi signed the accord with the late Sant Harchand Singh Longowal, he did it as the Prime Minister of India and it was said to be an accord with the Sikh community. But today the Sikhs are more alienated than they were before the accord. Punjab is now in the throes of ever-increasing violence that not only endangers peace in the state but also in the whole country.

Rajiv Gandhi signed several accords to take the wind out of the sails of those who were pressing for solutions; he never meant to implement the accords, neither in letter nor in spirit

Much was made of the two accords in Kashmir and Assam. But one has only to visit Kashmir to see how the accord that Rajiv Gandhi imposed on Farooq Abdullah, the state chief minister, has angered the people there. Over the years, the Kashmiris had got used to the idea of having a measure of autonomy within the country, without the constraints of New Delhi's tutelage. At that time the pro-Pakistan elements, which exploited religious sentiments made no headway and secular forces had the upper hand. After the accord, the fanatics and fundamentalists have come to the fore, and Farooq Abdullah, who at one time could take the bull of communalism by the horns, has been weakened, as he is now seen to be a part of the New Delhi establishment.

The Muslim United Front (MUF), an organisation for Mullahs and Maulvis, has begun to spread communal poison, particularly among the youths while Farooq, the staunch secularist, looks helpless with the millstone of the accord around his neck. For gaining a few ministerial seats for the Congress(I) in the state, Rajiv Gandhi has damaged an apparatus that had stood the test of time right through the Sheikh Abdullah regime and the earlier term of Farooq. Is there any doubt that the state is more unstable than ever before and the country a lot weaker?

The outcome of the Assam accord can be summed up with the words of the state chief minister, Prafulla Kumar Mohanta, whom I met during his last visit to New Delhi. He said that the accord existed only on paper; New Delhi simply refused to implement it. "Whatever promises Rajiv Gandhi made to us have been flouted," he stated emphatically. He even complained that his letters to the Prime Minister on the subject remained unacknowledged.

Little wonder that the All Assam Students Union (AASU), which was in the forefront of the agitation that culminated in the accord, has threatened to block the flow of oil from the state as a protest against the non-implementation of the accord. The proposed blockade may take us back to the days when practically every Assamese was up in arms against the Centre and when at the call of AASU thousands had come into the streets to voice their protest peacefully.

One might say that the accord with Laldenga in the neighbouring state of Mizoram has brought peace. But at what price? The accord has set up a dangerous precedence: the state now enjoys the rights to have direct trade with neighbouring countries. Even Jammu and Kashmir which has its own constitution, does not have that leeway. And now after the Mizoram experience, other north-eastern states have started demanding similar rights. Once when Sheikh Abdullah had proposed that the Muree Road to Pakistan should be opened to facilitate timber trade, the Centre curtly rejected it. Logs of wood still flow through the Jhelum from Kashmir to Pakistan, but New Delhi is not willing to offer to Srinagar what it has extended to Aizawl. And the irony is that despite all this, the Mizoram accord is said to be running into difficulties. Some of the remarks made by Laldenga of late are not too happy.

No doubt Rajiv Gandhi took the initiative in signing the accord which his mother, Indira Gandhi, did not. When the accords were signed, people heaved a sigh of relief and Rajiv Gandhi received kudos. But it is now clear that he signed them—often involving a bit of drama—to take the wind out of the sails of those who were pressing for solutions; he never meant to implement the accords, neither in letter, nor in spirit. All of it was propaganda; he has done very little to be boastful. ◻

TIME

REPORT

NOVEMBER 9, 1987

India Steps into a Quagmire

The Tigers are defeated, but the battle has just begun

Two Soviet-built Mi-24 helicopter gunships hovered 200 ft. above a marketplace in Sri Lanka's northern Jaffna Peninsula last week, emptying their formidable arsenal of rockets and rapid-fire shells. Indian pilots and gunners inside the distinctive double-bubble cockpits were trying to destroy a temporary field headquarters of the Tamil Tiger guerrillas. The Tigers had been waging a deadly rearguard action against the Indian peacekeeping force for more than two weeks, and the Indians were determined to wipe out the last pockets of resistance.

When the Mi-24s wheeled away from the marketplace, at least 21 civilians lay on the ground dying. Yet the Tiger headquarters a few feet away was hardly touched. At a hospital several miles to the north, foreign medical volunteers spent the afternoon amputating limbs and suturing bodies pierced by Mi-24 bullets. "All these patients are civilians," scrawled New Zealand Surgeon H.D. (Dick) Rawson on a list of people he had treated that day, including two who died.

India's war against the Tigers has turned into a shadowy conflict with no front lines, where civilians rather than soldiers are more likely to be casualties. Among the victims of last week's fighting was TIME Reporter Qadri Ismail. He was standing with a taxi driver on a country road watching a helicopter attack a target a mile away when the gunship suddenly turned and beelined for the two men, letting loose a burst of fire that left bullet fragments in the reporter's neck.

Indian peacekeeping forces last week ended their offensive against the Tamil Tigers, but they have failed to defeat and disarm the vast majority of the guerrillas, who have been trying to sabotage the implementation of the peace accord that was supposed to end the four-year-long Tamil rebellion. Instead of destroying the Tigers as a military force, the Indian army took heavy losses and could not prevent the Tigers from melting away with their guns, ammunition and explosives into the back lanes of Jaffna and the jungles of Northern province.

While the Indians were claiming to have killed more than 700 Tiger guerrillas, independent Sri Lankan sources and foreigners who witnessed some of the fighting put the number at less than 100. Indian forces showed visiting journalists a captured Tiger cache of homemade mines and mortars but were able to display only two of the Kalashnikov automatic rifles that the Tigers use. Concluded a worried Sri Lankan intelligence official: "As a fighting force, the Tigers have survived largely intact."

The Tigers slipped the Indian net, vowing to continue their struggle for an independent Tamil nation for years to come by waging an underground guerrilla campaign. In fact, that battle seems to have already begun. Tiger snipers last week were roaming Jaffna town, exploding mines in eastern Sri Lanka, and are suspected of bombing an Indian government office in the city of Kandy.

India, the regional superpower of southern Asia, appears to be on the verge of slipping into a quagmire comparable to the ones that trapped the U.S. in Viet Nam and the Soviet Union in Afghanistan. Indian forces are bogged down in a foreign land, living among a hostile populace and fighting a counterinsurgency war that it cannot win despite overwhelming power and high-technology weaponry. Says a Western diplomat in the Sri Lankan capital: "The Indians are in very, very serious trouble."

The Indian army had to pay a heavy price for its advance through Jaffna. Its own casualty figures, according to reliable sources, are considerably higher than the 214 officially listed. The soldiers have been shaken by guerrilla warfare, in which the main weapons include booby traps and homemade mines, and by the fearless Tigers, who are ready to die for their cause. Indian soldiers frequently blunder into ambushes laid by the Tigers.

The result has been increasingly jumpy Indian soldiers who have shot and killed Tamil civilians before realizing that they were unarmed innocents. TIME's Ismail confirmed instances where nervous soldiers mistakenly shot at a boy who was climbing a tree looking for a coconut, and at a middle-aged woman, inside a house, whose shadow was momentarily visible through a window. Estimates of civilian deaths in the offensive range upward from 400.

Despite claims to the contrary, Indian artillery and mortar units were not pinpointing their fire on military targets but were aiming broadly. In two cases, Indian shells landed directly on refugee camps. "Indian shelling is worse than Sri Lankan bombing," said one refugee. "You can see bombs falling from a plane, and you can run for cover. But when the shells come, you don't know where they're from or where they're going." People could not understand why this was happening and kept saying, "The Indians came here to protect us, and look at what they're doing to us."

The Tigers, though, have committed their share of atrocities. They entered Jaffna Hospital to set an ambush for advancing Indian troops, despite pleas from doctors to abide by an old agreement placing the hospital out-of-bounds for all armed combatants. When the Tigers opened fire on the unsuspecting Indians entering the hospital, both doctors and patients were killed in the cross fire.

Most Indian and Sri Lankan officials are downplaying the fact that the Tigers are still a formidable fighting force capable of inflicting havoc in northern and eastern Sri Lanka. But one Sri Lankan Cabinet minister admitted that it will prove impossible to implement the peace accord and restore democracy in areas where armed Tigers can still roam free. As long as that is happening, it will be equally impossible for the Indian peacekeeping force to return home. —*By Ross H. Munro/Colombo*

Ready for an ambush: Tamils plan their next moves in Northern province

Despite the latest offensive, the guerrillas have survived as a fighting force.

An Indian Air Force Mi-8 helicopter lands at an improvised heliped on a road strip 2 km short of the Jaffna Fort.

IPKF jawans getting ready to board an Indian Air Force MI-8 helicopter in Palaly-Jaffna, to move to an operational area. *Defence pictures.*

(Operation Pawan)

CIVILIANS KILLED

KORUVIL	
S. Shanmugalingam	**S. Annapuranam**
R. Kumarasamy	**S. Ponni**
P. Kanagammah	**R. Chandravasanthy**
V. Nadarasa	S. Kandasamy
M. Nadanasabapathy	K. Thangarasa
V. Sinniah	J. Gunabalasingam
S. Nallammah	S. Ratnam
R. Panchanathan	S. Annamalai
S. Mahadevan	**S. Ledchumipillai**
N. Thirunavukkarasu	S. Nalliah
S. Selvaratnam	**S. Annapooranam**
N. Sureshkumar	S. Seelan
S. Sinnappu	K. Thillaimaran
N. Malarkody	R. Sivathasan
K. Sivakolunthu	A. Kandiah
N. Sinnammah	**R.S. Vasanthy**
S. Veerasingam	T. Chandramohan
V. Murugesu	K. Thangarajah
Puvaneswary	S. Ravindranathan
S. Kandasamy	V. Pakiyasamy
K. Thangalingam	R. Rasanayagam
S. Kanagalingam	V. Thangavelauthan
K. Sachithananthan	A. Thanarasa
K. Sinnathurai	K. Sinnamany
N. Kathiri	KANKESANTHURAI
M. Paramalingam	V. Velautham
V. Kandasamy	C. Thangavelautham
K. Paramanathan	A. Thambithurai
K. Markandu	**A.T. Sridevi**
N. Iyathurai	**A.T. Sivajini**
K. Sellammah	**A.T. Subajini**
P. Sajeevini	A.T. Kethes
L. Padmavathy	A.T. Kones
L. Annalingam	R. Poobalasingam

AFFIDAVIT

MURUGAN THANGAMMAH, (45) Palaly South, Vasavilan.

The deceased Nanian Murugan (56) is my husband.

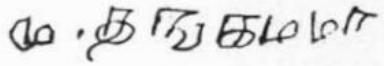
My late husband above named was a daily waged labourer and he was supporting me and my son, Murugan Pon Ratha (12) from his earnings.

On 6th of November, 1987 at about 8.00 a.m. I was conversing with my late husband. At that time there were continuous gunfiring and blow of Mortar shells from all directions. Suddenly a Mortar shell fell on the compound and blasted heavily. Sustaining severe injuries he died at the spot.

The prevailed tension did not permit me in proceeding for a sudden death inquest, as such no inquest was held.

The dead body of my son was cremated at Kuddiapulam Cemetery, Vasavilan on the same evening at 4.00 p.m.

The untimely death of my husband was caused irrepairable loss to me and my son. He has left us without no source of income.



Mrs. VALLIAMMAI NAGALINGAM (43) at No. 80, Lotus Road, Vannarpannai West, Jaffna.

I am the mother of Nagalingam Navanesalingam, killed in shell blast on 6.11.87.

My husband Nagamany Nagalingam is sick and physically unfit to move about.

I and my family took refuge at the Koddayampathy Sri Sivasubramania Temple when Vannarpannai became a target of shell attack during the last week of October 1987.

On 6.11.87 at about 2.00 a.m. shells were lobbed on the Temple when there was a melee and refugees ran helter-skelter.

My son Navanesalingam ran out and waited near a wall on the outer court yard of the Temple when a shell fell closeby and blasted causing severe abdominal injuries.

He was dead on the spot.

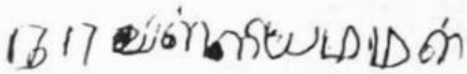
The dead body of my son was taken home for the funeral.

His body was cremated at the Kombayan Manel Crematorium at about 11.00 a.m.

My deceased son was 25 years old, unmarried, a Mason by profession who earned an average monthly income of Rs. 1,500/-.

My late son was the main bread winner of the family as my husband is an irregular wage earner due to his sickness.

I have ten children, of whom six are school going, who depended on the earnings of my deceased son for maintenance and up keep which has now been denied.



SOKKALINGAM RETNAM, (48) 5th mile - post Kudathanai.

The deceased person Sokkalingam Chandralingam, aged 22 years was my son.

He was a farmer.

On 7.11.87 at about 7 a.m. my son left for his farm.

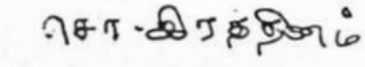
At about 9 a.m. I was informed that my son was shot and killed by the army while he was on his way to his farm.

I came to know that he was accidentally shot when the army hiding behind a coconut grove opened fire at a speeding van.

His body was brought home and was cremated on the following day at Sudalaipitty cemetery.

My husband deserted me ten yers ago.

My daughter Kanthimathy is a heart patient and a deafmute.



VAITHY JACOB (66)
Subramaniam Street, Chunnakam.

I am a Fruit Seller at Chunnakam Market.

My wife, children and I were living in our house at the above said address.

Curfew in this area was lifted at 8 a.m. on 7.11.87.

I left home at 8.05 a.m. and went to the church.

When I was in the church, few of our relatives who came to the church brought my son J. Jude Anandakumar (14) to the church.

I observed that my son was bleeding profusely from injuries on both thighs.

My son J. Jude Anandakumar succumbed to his injuries at the church.

I removed the dead body home and burial took place the following morning.

My son J. Jude Anandakumar was a student Skandavarodaya College, Chunnakam.

I came to know that my son J. Jude Anandakumar too had left home at 8.15 to go to the church and had been shot by Indian Peace Keeping Force personnel stationed at the Chunnakam Junction sentry Post.

VARATHARAJAH NAGAMMAH, (32) Palavodai, Uduvil.

The deceased Kidnan Varatharajah, aged 33 years was my husband.

He was a Casual Labourer.

On 7.11.87 at about 6 a.m. my husband left home saying that he is going to a nearby shop to purchase some provisions.

After he went I heard some explosion from the direction of the shop.

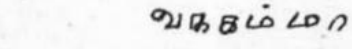
Little later I was informed that my husband was killed when a shell fell near the shop and exploded.

I rushed to the scene of incident and found my husband's lifeless body which bore a gaping wound on the neck caused by shell shrapnel.

His body was cremated at Palavodai cemetery on the same day itself.

I have four children to support.

After my husband's untimely death we are left without any income and undergoing severe hardships.



ABOORVANATHAN MAHAMARI (33) Kulanai, Araly North, Vaddukoddai.

The deceased child Aboorvanathan Jeyavathani aged 10 years was my daughter.

On 8.11.87 at about 5.00 p.m. my daughter was playing with two other children in front of a closed shop which is situated in the next compound.

A shell fell near her and exploded.

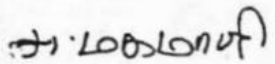
She was killed instantaneously.

Other children escaped with minor injuries.

The burial took place on the following day.

I have four children.

My husband is a poor mason.



JOSEPH NICHOLAS EMMANUEL, (30) Periyamathavady Arasady, Maviddapuram, Tellipalai.

I am the younger brother of the deceased Antony Joseph Sebastian who was killed in shell blast on 8.11.87.

My late brother a vegetable vendor, while waiting at his stall in the Jaffna market square was hit by shrapnels darting from a shell explosion. The shell fell in front of the stall.

He received severe abdominal injuries and died on the spot.

His dead body was removed by Santiapillai Arulanandam and was delivered at his residence at 204 Grousalt Road, Jaffna.

On receipt of information on 9.11.87 I came to Jaffna and his body was buried in St. Mary's burial ground on the same day.

My brother ran a vegetable and grocery stall at the Jaffna Market and earned an average monthly income of Rs. 1,500/-.

My brother was unmarried and he looked after and maintained my younger brother and sister who are school going.

Since his death, they are undergoing hardships due to non receipt of maintenance and financial assistance and they are orphans.

I am not in a position to maintain the two as my earnings are hardly sufficient to maintain myself.

J. N. Emmanuel.

MYLVAGANAM SADACHARALINGAM (34), Hensman Lane, Chavakachcheri.

I was employed as a Fitter in the Power Loom of the Chavakachcheri M.P.C.S. Ltd.,

On 8.11.87 IPKF soldiers who were won patrol duty while passing our house shot at me when I was standing at the entrance of my house.

I suffered a gun shot injury on the right shoulder joint resulting in a compound fracture.

I was admitted to Chavakachcheri Govt. Hospital the same day and transferred to General Hospital, Jaffna on 23.11.87.

I was hospitalised till 28.11.87 and discharged but continue to receive physiotherapy treatment.

I cannot bend or lift my right arm.

I have been informed by hospital authorities that I may have to undergo an operation in two month's time if there is an improvement.

I have now lost my job due to this injury and seek assistance until such time I am able to use my right hand.

NADARAJAH MAHESWARY (48) Kulanai, Araly North, Vaddukoddai.

On 8.11.87 at about 5.00 p.m. a shell fell within our compound and exploded.

I was struck by a shrapnel on my spine and started to bleed profusely.

Three family members were killed on the spot.

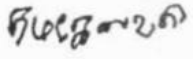
I was warded there for 17 days.

Later I received treatment at a private dispensary nearby till 25.12.87.

I am unable to use my right hand or leg due to the nerve damage after the incident.

I am unable to walk properly or attend to my household chores.

I have five children.



PATHMAVATHY THURAIRAJAH, (51) widow of the Late Thambirasa Thurairajah, Theni Lane, Valvettiturai.

I am the widow of the Late Thambirasa Thurairajah killed in Army gun-fire.

The IPKF conducted a search operation in our area on 8.11.87 commencing at 5.00 a.m.

At about 10.00 a.m. on 8.11.87 when my husband was returning home on his push cycle after visiting a relative of ours, Indian Army Personnel coming from the opposite direction opened fire on some youths running away.

My husband was hit by a bullet on his chest causing a severe bleeding injury. The bullet entered his left chest making its exit through his back.

He fell dead on the spot and his body was brought home by relatives.

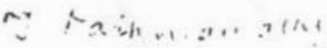
His dead body was cremated at about 1.00 p.m on 8.11.87 at the Oorani Crematorium, Valvettitorai.

My husband was a farmer who earned an average monthly income of Rs 1,500/-

I and my children have been left with no maintenance or financial assistance since his death.

My house was damaged in aerial bombing by the Sri Lankan Forces and I with my children live in a room which escaped damage.

I have four children and all are school-going, and the eldest is 25 years, and the youngest is 17 years.



SEENI PARAMESWARI (47) Navaly East, Navaly, Manipay.

The deceased Karthi Seeni (54) was my husband.

8.11.87 the army was firing shells as it advanced through our village.

We left our house and took shelter inside the nearby Murugamoorthy Temple.

At 12 noon I was informed that my husband was wounded by a shell which fell inside our house compound as he was about to leave for the temple to join us.

I went to our house and carried him back to the temple.

He had a large wound on his back caused by a shell fragment.

He died on 13.11.87.

We cremated his body on 13.11.87 near our house as we were unable to go to the crematorium due to the tension prevailed on that day.

I have one unmarried daughter (12).

IN □ PARLIAMENT

Accord only hope of peace: PM

NEW DELHI, Nov. 9.

The following is the text of the Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi's statement in Parliament today on the implementation of the Indo-Sri Lankan Agreement:

I rise to inform the House about progress on the implementation of the Indo-Sri Lankan Agreement, including the background to the operations of the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) in the Jaffna peninsula.

The Agreement has been acclaimed internationally. There is a widespread consensus that the full implementation of the Agreement will be of universal benefit. Tamil aspirations would be met, the unity and integrity of Sri Lanka preserved, and peace and stability restored to the region. Some of our important security concerns would also be met. Therefore, the Government of India is committed to the full implementation of this Agreement. We believe that this resolve is shared by the Government of Sri Lanka.

O.V. Vijayan, News Times, 14.11.87.

Satisfactory progress: In the three months since the Agreement was signed, we have made satisfactory progress on many fronts. Sri Lankan security personnel have stayed in their barracks. Home Guards in the East Province have been disarmed and the Special Task Force has been largely withdrawn. Over 3,300 Tamil detenus have been released under an amnesty, and the rest would have been freed if the LTTE had not disrupted the return to normality.

The contours of civil administration in the North and East were being drawn on lines suggested by Tamil representatives ranging from the LTTE to the TULF. The Interim Administrative Council had been announced, with the LTTE given a decisive majority. The return of the refugees from India had been planned in consultation with the Government of Sri Lanka. We had identified priority areas for rehabilitation, to be financed through a grant of Rs. 25 crores annouoced by India.

Peace had been established in the North and East of Sri Lanka. The return of normality was imminent. It is a matter of great regret that the LTTE threw all this away. They went back on every commitment they had given to us. They deliberately set out to wreck the Agreement, because they were unable or unwilling to make the transition from militancy to the democratic political process. The LTTE were given every possible encouragement and opportunity to join the political mainstream and even to play a leading role in the process. The LTTE leadership, which had masterminded the killings of over 600 rival Tamil militant cadres, were permitted to retain their personal arms for their security. They were allowed to handover their arms at their own pace, even though this enabled motivated parties to question our resolve to implement the Agreement.

LTTE demands conceded: Our High Commissioner flew to Jaffna several times to find out what the LTTE leadership wanted. On September 28, an agreement was reached. The minutes signed conceded every single demand of the LTTE concerning the composition and functioning of the Interim Administrative Council. In return, the LTTE reiterated their support to the Agreement and once again promised to lay down arms. The establishment of the Interim Administrative Council was announced in accordance with this Agreement. But within hours the LTTE went back on their commitment. The LTTE chose to adopt a course of violence.

While they promised us support to the Agreement they started a propaganda campaign against India and the Agreement through meetings and through their illegal broadcasting facilities. They organised disturbances in Jaffna, disrupting normal life and the process of reconstruction and rehabilitation. They threatened all Tamil civilians who disagreed with them. They hunted down and massacred about 100 members of other Tamil militant groups. They tried to inflame Tamil opinion in Jaffna by imposing an unnecessary and tragic fast unto death by one of their cadres to demand concessions that were already under discussion and were resolved to their satisfaction. At this stage the unfortunate suicide of 12 LTTE cadres took place.

Armed attacks on IPKF: The LTTE killed the eight Sri Lankan soldiers in their custody and massacred over 200 civilians in the Eastern Province. They publicly repudiated the Agreement and started armed attacks on the IPKF. The LTTE's repudiation of the Agreement, their attacks on Sinhalese and Muslims in the East and their murder of Sri Lankan soldiers threatened to produce a Sinhala backlash that would have destroyed the Agreement and produced a cycle of violence worse than any island had so far seen. The victims would have been mainly Tamils especially in the South and in the Central Highlands.

The House will appreciate that this could not have been allowed to happen. In these circumstances the IPKF were given instructions to apprehend anyone carrying arms or involved in the massacre of civilians. At this point the LTTE launched attacks on the IPKF. There was then no alternative to disarming the LTTE.

The IPKF were given strict instructions not to use tactics or weapons that could cause major casulties among the civilian population of Jaffna, who were hostages to the LTTE.

The Indian Army have carried out these instructions with outstanding discipline and courage, accepting, in the process, a high level of sacrifices for protecting the Tamil civilians.

I place on record Government's very deep appreciation of the dedication and high moral standards with which the Indian Armed Forces have conducted their operations in Jaffna, against a group that flouts every norm of civilized behaviour, coercing old men, women and children to act as shields, using innocent children as human bombs, murdering prisoners, and boobytrapping houses of the people of Jaffna on whose behalf they claim to be fighting.

Food supplies: We wish a speedy recovery to our wounded soldiers. I pay homage to the soldiers who have laid down their lives. I am sure the entire House will join me in conveying our tribute to our gallant armed forces and our deepest sympathies to the bereaved families. Despite grave risk to IAF helicopters, emergency food supplies were airdropped over the city even during the fighting. The IPKF shared their rations with the refugees in Jaffna. Cooked food was sent to refugee camps as soon as these came under the IPKF's protection.

We have made a major effort to restore civil supplies, amenities and administration to Jaffna. Simultaneously, ship loads of essential food and other supplies have been sent to the port of Kankesanthurai. Relief convoys are being sent to Jaffna even though the LTTE continues to attack these humanitarian missions. Electricity and telephone communications which had been sabotaged by the LTTE, have been partially restored with equipment flown out from India to replace what had been damaged.

A small team of civil administrators has been sent to advise and assist the IPKF in relief and rehabilitation work. The Indian Red Cross, have sent over their personnel and in cooperation with the local Red Cross, they are doing a remarkable job of providing relief and medical assistance in the city.

The unfortunate developments in Jaffna were not of our making. We reacted with a heavy heart when there was no alternative. We got the LTTE everything they wanted, disregarding the cost to our credibility with other Tamil militant groups and all communities, including the Tamils. We overlooked the LTTE's vicious propaganda even before the outbreak of hostil-

ities, not just against the Agreement but against India and the IPKF.

In the Interim Administrative Council, they were given a clear majority of seven out of twelve, including a Chairman of their choice. Other Tamil militant groups were excluded at their insistence. While the Government of India have accommodated every concern of the LTTE, the LTTE have not honoured any of their commitments. Even after they attacked the IPKF and precipitated the hostilties, we have repeatedly said that if the LTTE hands over their arms, supports the Agreement and renounces the path of violence they can still play an important role in the future democratic set-up. President Jayewardene has already promised them amnesty again if they surrender their weapons and support the Agreement. The LTTE have responded only with ultimatums and renewed propaganda, spreading misinformation and lies aimed at tarnishing the image of India and our armed forces. We still hope that better sense will prevail.

Return of refugees: Throughout, we have worked towards ensuring an early and effective devolution of powers so that the legitimate aspirations of the Tamils are met and they can live in security with dignity and honour as equal citizens of Sri Lanka. Even while trying to control the violence unleashed by the LTTE, we have been mindful of the need to ensure an early return of Sri Lankan Tamil refugees from India and the need to ensure that fresh colonisation of Tamils areas does not take place.

There were reports of Sinhala colonisation in the East even after the Agreement was signed. This naturally caused concern to the Tamils, particularly since large number of Tamils of the province are still refugees, either in India or in the North. We have taken this up strongly with the Government of Sri Lanka to ensure that this does not happen. The Sri Lankan Government have agreed to the formation of a Monitoring Committee consisting of all communities, to investigate complaints of fresh colonisation. We are keen to ensure an early return of Sri Lanka refugees in India to their homes. The Government of Sri Lanka have also agreed to cooperate with us to facilitate the early return to their homes of Tamils who have been internally displaced. We hope the process will start soon. Long term peace in Sri Lanka will hinge on the devolution package.

The Sri Lankan Government have already introduced legislation in their Parliament to amend their Constitution to provide for the creation of Provincial Councils and the devolution of powers to them.

The legislation also provides for the creation of a single Tamil Province in the North and the East. In the light of Sri Lanka's unitary Constitution, this legislation is unprecedented. The powers it seeks to devolve to the Provincial Councils are considerable. However some of its provisions do not fully meet Tamil expectations. This matter was discussed extensively with President Jayewardene in Kathmandu and during his three-day working visit to Delhi. We have received firm assurances that if, ever the coming months, difficulties arise the Sri Lanka Government will make such changes as are found necessary.

The Government of India believe that despite some problems and delays, many of which were foreseen but unavoidable in the resolution of an issue of this magnitude and complexity, this Agreement represents the only way of safeguarding legitimate Tamil interests and ensuring a durable peace in Sri Lanka.

Difficult role: Some have chosen to criticise the Agreement. None has shown a better way to meeting the legitimate aspirations of the Tamils in Sri Lanka, restoring peace in the country and of meeting our own security concerns in the region.

We have accepted a role which is difficult but which is in our national interest to discharge. We shall not shirk our obligations and commitments. This is a national endeavour. I am confident our efforts will have the full support to the House.

The agreement has been acclaimed internationally. There is a widespread consensus that the full implementation of the Agreement will be of universal benefit.

• • •

The Indian Army have acted with outstanding discipline and courage accepting, in the process a high level of sacrifices for protecting the Tamil Civilians. I place on record Government's very deep appreciation of the dedication and high moral standards with which the Indian Armed Forces have conducted their operations in Jaffna, against a group that flouts every norm of civilised behaviour.

• • •

The LTTE have responded only with ultimatums and renewed propaganda spreading misinformation and lies aimed at tarnishing the image of India and our Armed Forces.

• • •

We have accepted a role which is in our national interest to discharge. This is a national endeavour.

Anjolie Menon

RAPED

I am Miss. YOGARANEE THANGARAJAH aged 19. My father is dead and the head of my family is my mother Arulamma who has the responsibility of looking after a family of seven. With hardly any means my mother tried to educate me. I had the fortune to read up to the G.C.E.O/L at the R.K.M. Vevekananda Girls M.V and had to be at home with my sister eleven year Sripriya now and then joined by my niece while other members of the family went out for breadwinning during the day time.

It was on such a day the 23rd November this year that the said incident in my unfortunate life happened. It was a fine morning, sunny but cool. At about 10.30 the dogs from the neighbouring homes began barking, the signal that unknown or unwelcome vistors were around; the members of the IPKF were around. Two of them entered the compound. Fear and suspense could be felt and I told them that there were no Males at home Yet they came on. Unsuspecting my sister told them that the two of us with our four year old niece were the only occupants, the other went near my sister and started threantening her not to shout. Then she was beaten by one of them while the other held me hard when I tried to get free, now afraid that I was going to be beaten too. I could hear my sister shriek and fall down and I was feeling very giddy. I was pushed down and the ground was turning under me. I could see the man as if in a dream lying on me and tearing my jacket. In vain I tried to push him. I could not see much and felt a hand baring my legs and using force on me. After he got up the other man did the same thing. I could not see anything but felt being kicked. Then it was complete blank.

When I opened my eyes I was being examined by a doctor in a dispensary. Later I was taken to the General Hospital in Batticaloa.

My life is blasted by the Peace Keepers from India. My only wish is that no such fate overtakes any female in the future in the universe.

T. Yogarani

NEWS

Human chain in protest against IPKF

MADRAS, Nov. 6.

Hundreds of people linked arms from Parrys to Saidapet in the "human chain" organised today by the Confederation for the Protection of the Rights of Eelam Tamils to protest the military action by the Indian Peace Keeping Force in Sri Lanka.

Apart from the DMK, DK and TNKC, a large number of students, Sri Lankan Tamils, old men and women and even some children took part in the protest, which lasted from 4-30 p.m. to 5 p.m. The AIADMK stayed away from the protest following a party decision. The protest was originally planned for Monday, but the organisers had to put it off as it rained heavily that afternoon.

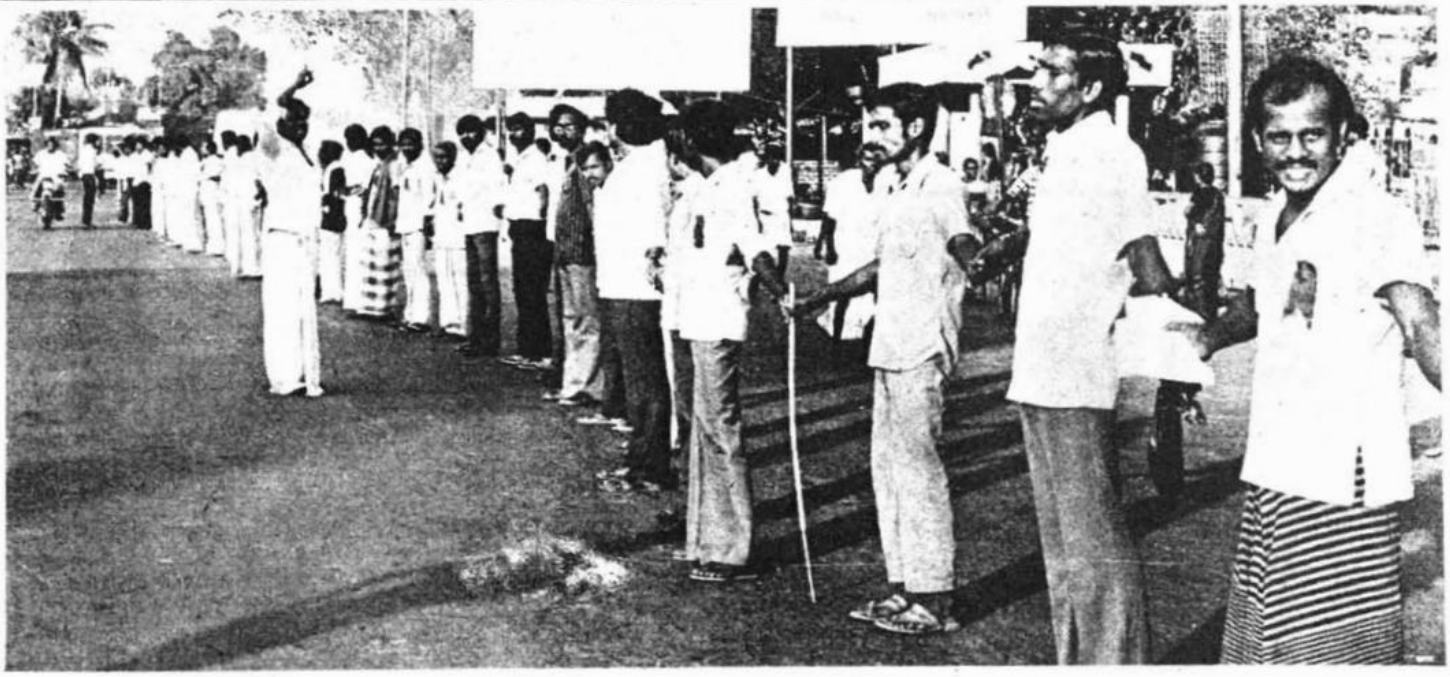
Pouring in: On Friday, participants began pouring on to the roads, a 10-km stretch, even by 3-30 p.m. and standing in a line. Volunteers went about trying to join the links in the chain. However, at some places there were gaps. Many parents had brought along their children, some of them infants, others barely five or six years old.

The protestors shouted slogans denouncing the Indian military action in Jaffna and urging the Centre to "stop killing innocent Tamils in Sri Lanka." An Army truck that was going on Anna Salai near Arts College was stopped by some of the protestors and the driver was jeered at. The police intervened and restored order.

Traffic was snarled on most roads since the police would not allow vehicles to enter the main roads cutting across the "chain". The DMK President, Mr. M. Karunanidhi, drove in a car, inspecting the "chain". Among those who participated in the protest were, Mr. Sadiq Pasha, DMK treasurer; Mr. N. V. N. Somu, MP., Mr. K. Veeramani, DK General Secretary; Mr. P. Nedumaran, TNKC President, several MLAs, film personalities and literary figures.

College girls forming a part of the 'human chain'.

NOT BLIND TO HUMAN BONDAGE: Two of the disabled participants in the 'human chain' organised on Friday. *Express*



THE HINDU

Govt. gets brickbats, bouquets for involvement in Sri Lanka

IN PARLIAMENT

NEW DELHI, Nov. 10.

Opposition members in the Lok Sabha today assailed the Government for "unnecessarily" committing the Indian army to fight the Tamil militants in Sri Lanka in what they called an "impossible" situation.

Participating in a special discussion on the state-ment made in Parliament yesterday by the Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, over the events leading to the operations launched on October 10, 1987 by the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) to disarm the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), the Opposition members expressed the unanimous view that the Sri Lanka President, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, had tricked India into rushing to pull his chestnut out of the fire.

"Misadventure": Mr. Dinesh Goswami (AGP) said the Indian Government's handling of the Sri Lanka situation since the signing of the July 29 agreement between the two countries was its "greatest misadventure on both the diplomatic and political fronts".

India, he said, had unnecessarily gone in for a military solution to an internal ethnic problem of a neighbouring country, in violation of the basic tenets of India's foreign policy. No one was happy with the Indo-Sri Lankan Agreement, neither the Tamils nor the Sinhalese, Mr. Goswami said.

Mr. Goswami, who initiated the four-hour debate, demanded an immediate ceasefire to facilitate negotiations with the Tamil militants and an early pullout of the IPKF from the island. "We must come out of Sri Lanka at the earliest", he demanded.

Stating that the events after the agreement had proved correct the apprehensions of many members in the Opposition, Mr. Goswami asked under what authority had the Prime Minister signed the accord when the problem was basically an internal one.

Undeclared war against LTTE: Besides, he said, India should not have signed it knowing well that the LTTE's cooperation was not forthcoming. "We have now gone in for an undecalred was against the LTTE."

Heavy war cost: Mr. Goswami said he was not supporting the LTTE for all that its members were doing. "But I admire their commitment to a cause." Besides losing the lives of Indian soldiers, India was also spending large sums of money on the Sri Lanka operations at a time when the country was facing a serious financial constraint.

It is in interst of all: Cong (I) member Mr. Dinesh Singh (Cong-I) disagreed with the Opposition contention and said the Indo-Sri Lankan agreement was "in our national interest, in the interest of Sri Lanka and in the interest of the whole South Asian region. "Both in signing the agreement and in its implementation, India discharged its responsibility in the best interest of all."

Referring to the background to the signing of the agreement, Mr. Dinesh Singh said they should see the far-reaching aspects of the agreement. "One neighbour seeks our cooperation to find a solution to their problem and to check foreign intervention. Are we to turn a blind eye to it"? When Bangladesh sought India's support in the past, the Indian Government offered its cooperation.

Mr. Dinesh Singh said that when the Government decided to support Sri Lanka, it took all steps to ensure that everyone concerned with the ethnic problem was consulted. "I have no reason to doubt that the leader of the LTTE himself agreed to the accord and decided to abide by it." It was not India which sought a military solution.

Total negation of facts: India's forces went to Sri Lanka to disarm the militants and to see that the agreement was fully implemented. If the LTTE had kept its word and surrended its arms, there would have been no problem. To say that India was seeking a military solution was a "total negation of the facts".

Commotion: There was comotion when Mr. N. V. N. Somu (DMK) interrupted as Mr. Dinesh Singh was praising the Indian army's role in taking precautions to avoid civilian casualties.

Mr. Dinesh Singh retorted, "It is unfortunate that there are members who are not proud of being Indian and of their army".

Mr. Somu: I am a Tamil.

Mr. Dinesh Singh: I am an Indian.

In the din that followed the Indian Union Muslim League member, Mr. G. M. Banatwalla, unsuccessfully pleaded with the Chair to expunge the remarks of Mr. Dinesh Singh saying it amounted to casting aspersions en bloc.

Mr. Dinesh Singh said he had no intention of casting aspersions against any particular individuals. The Speaker, Mr. Balram Jakhar, said he did not think there was any member who was not proud of being Indian or about the Indian army.

Mr. Madhu Dandavate (Janata) said that when somebody said he was a Tamilian it did not conflict with his being an Indian.

Mr. Dinesh Singh concluded that the army was doing its job with great care and dignity and the Government was discharging its responsibility in implementing the agreement in the national and larger interests.

Mr. Dinesh Singh said the Indian Government was very patiently putting up with all that was done by the LTTE and still got for it the most in the power package. Denying the charge that India had opted for a military solution, he said it was the LTTE which had gone in for it. The LTTE had killed more Tamils than the Sri Lankan armed forces had done, he added.

"Tamils bulldozed into accord": Mr. Madhava Reddy (TDP) said the Government of India bulldozed the Tamil groups of Sri Lanka into agreeing to an accord which was not in their interest.

He also criticised the Government for not "reprimanding" the Sri Lankan President for his reported statement accusing the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, Mr. M. G. Ramachandran, of harbouring extremists.

R.K. Lakshman, Times of India.

Mr. Reddy pleaded for an immediate ceasefire in Jaffna saying that "the LTTE was not our enemy, they might be misguided."

Mr. Bhagawat Jha Azad (Cong-I) countered the charge by an Opposition member that the IPKF was working to force a "military solution". He said first the Sri Lankan Government and now the LTTE were in fact trying to force a military solution, while the IPKF had gone there to ensure the implementation of the Indo-Sri Lankan accord which had been hailed the world over.

Pat for IPKF: Congratulating the IPKF for the tremendous restraint it had shown under "a very difficult situation," Mr. Suresh Kurup (CPI-M) regretted that the LTTE had once again taken to the militant path.

The former External Affairs Minister, Mr. Baliram Bhagat (Cong-I), pointed out that the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement, which reflected the unanimous opinion of the House, fitted in with India's foreign policy.

'Diplomatic absurdity': Terming the agreement "a diplomatic absurdity", Syed Sahabuddin (Janata) said it was a document signed in haste "to draw attention away from certain domestic issues." The agreement had "a fatal flaw" in that the LTTE was not made a party to it and now there was a grim outlook that the Indian forces were in for a prolonged war into which they had been sucked, he said.

Likening the situation to those in Vietnam, Afghanistan and Lebanon, the former diplomat regretted that the Indian forces were at the beck and call of a foreigner who could at any time order them out.

He called for an immediate ceasefire, military disengagement and resumption of India's mediatory role in finding a solution to the ethnic problem. The process must lead to a direct agreement between the Sri Lankan Government and the Tamil militants.

Extract apology: Mr. P. Kolandaivelu (AIADMK) criticised the offensive against the LTTE and accused the Indian authorities and the IPKF of inaction against the initial Sri Lankan violation of the accord. He demanded the Government extract an apology from the Sri Lankan President for his charges against the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister.

Mr. Kolandaivelu said the implementation of the July 29 accord with Colombo had gone awry from the date of its signing. The Jayewardene Government had violated the provisions of the agreement and the IPKF "at our expense is killing our own people on Lanka soil."

Mr. Kolandaivelu said the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, Mr. M. G. Ramachandran, had asked for an immediate truce. "If the LTTE leader, Mr,. Prabakaran does not respond, then the Government is free to act on its own. "The ball is in your court," he said.

Mr. P. R. Kumaramangalam (Cong-I) called for implementing the accord in full but questioned the wisdom of giving "more than necessary" importance and latitude to the LTTE, which he said, was not the sole representative of the Sri Lankan Tamils. Thee were several other groups which should be associated with the agreement and its implementation.

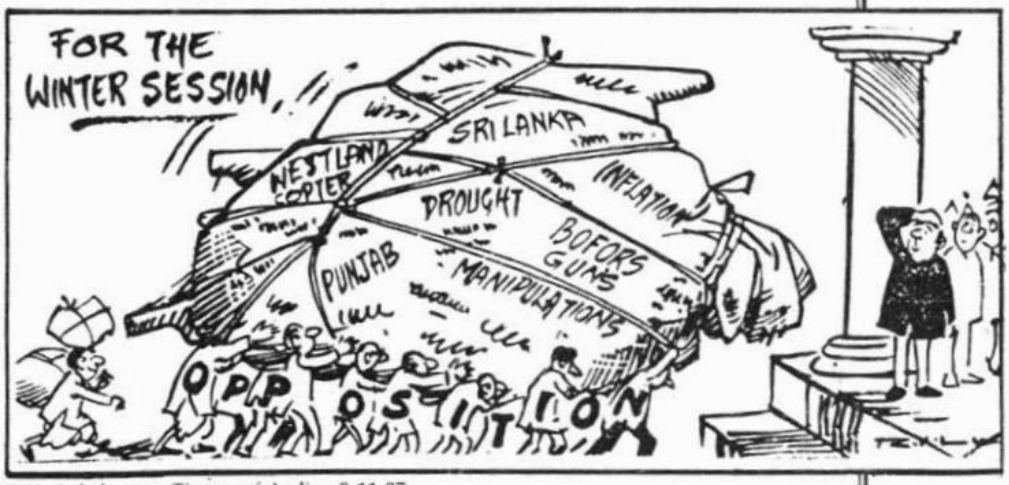
Mr. Indrajit Gupta (CPI), reiterating his party's support to the accord, felt that it suffered from the "basic flaw" of attaching too much significance to Mr. V. Prabhakaran's assurances. He doubted whether Mr. Prabhakaran and the LTTE had any ideology at all and said they seemed to be "wedded to the creed of violence."

Call for unilateral ceasefire: Mr. Gupta called for a "bold step" of a unilateral ceasefire by the IPKF and time to the LTTE to surrender arms. If the LTTE did not come out well out of this "test", then the IPKF should go all out to achieve the job at hand.

Mr. R. Jeevarathinam (Cong-I) blamed some political parties in Tamil Nadu for supporting the LTTE, knowing fully well that "Eelam" for the Sri Lankan Tamils was not possible. By defending the atrocities committed by the LTTE, they were trying to make political capital.

The debate will be resumed tomorrow. — PTI, UNI

IPKF jawans unloading supplies from "Island Glory" at Jaffna on Tuesday.



R.K. Lakshman, Times of India, 8.11.87.

NEXT BATTLE FOR IPKF

To win over the Jaffna Tamils

REPORT

IT was an overriding death-wish that seized LTTE in the month of October. It was with cold fanaticism that the LTTE men took on the IPKF and they knew that they were doomed to failure.

V. Prabhakaran assumed for himself the familiar role of saviour of his people, but he only managed to lead the 1,30,000 population of Jaffna into a deeper morass of suffering. Jaffna today is a ghost city, its face pockmarked by bullets. It is a city with mangled electric poles, buildings with gaping holes, broken statues, burnt petrol bunks and the stink of death pervading the air in some of the most populated areas. Said an army officer: "When we came here, the Jaffna lagoon, with its multitude of boats, presented such a pretty sight in the evening. Now we can only see crows crowding the place. And some water fowl which we often shoot."

The Jaffna Tamil has often seen his homeland turn into a war zone. Different people have been training their guns at him at different times. It is this suffering which would, according to Indian policy-makers, cut through the charisma of Prabhakaran and sever the links between the Jaffna Tamil and LTTE. It was argued in Delhi—and believed also by influential sections—that the Jaffna Tamil would, once the back of LTTE is broken, come to identify himself with the IPKF.

Said a spokesman of the external affairs ministry: "It is for the first time in years that people in Jaffna know what democratic freedom is, having been rid of the totalitarian rule of LTTE." But it is apparent, after a visit to the Jaffna hospital and a refugee camp, that the Indian policy-makers had miscalculated. The charisma of Prabhakaran and his Tigers still holds. It was not LTTE coercion which had made the Jaffna Tamil support the Tigers.

The LTTE supremo is seen by most people of Jaffna as a rebel on the run, one who had gone to Delhi to wake up to an accord he did not envisage, and to which he had agreed after a great deal of cajoling and some pressure. That he was virtually kept a prisoner in Delhi has not been entirely forgotten by the people of Jaffna.

If there is anyone who has upset the Indian policy—or the lack of it—in Sri Lanka, it is Prabhakaran. The IPKF is now in control of Jaffna but the popularity of LTTE is not on the wane.

Most of the Tamils in Jaffna this correspondent talked to spoke highly of the Tigers and their leader. Thirty-five-year-old Martin, employed in a soft drinks factory in Jaffna, said he preferred LTTE because the Tigers at least did not fire at them or drop shells over their houses—referring obliquely to what the Jaffna citizens believed the IPKF had done in its march against the Tigers. Martin along with 3,500 others had sought refuge at the Lady of the Refuge Church and so did not know what was happening outside in the city, but tended to believe that Indian soldiers had broken into their houses and looted property.

T. Vimla, 45, who lived near the Jaffna railway station was afraid of being caught in the crossfire. She decided to move to the refugee camp when she saw a group of Indian soldiers make passes at her daughter. She did not understand their language but the gestures were obvious enough. At the refugee camp there is a feeling of collective security. Besides, unlike the stray Indian soldiers, the officers of the Indian army are a polite lot and helpful.

Silva Rajan, a 51-year-old driver, heard rumours that Indian soldiers were rather rough with civilians who were caught sheltering the Tigers. He

Briefing newsmen. *Brig. J.S. Dhillon, whose men captured a Tiger arms cache*

Most of the Tamils in Jaffna spoke highly of the Tigers. One said that the Tigers at least did not fire at them or drop shells over their house—referring obliquely to what he believed the IPKF had done.

did not want to get into any unnecessary problems with the IPKF and decided to move into the camp.

Mrs Dominique, a mother of six,had already spent seven days in the camp. The IPKF soldiers had not misbehaved with women in her household. But she had heard that such instances had taken place in other parts of the town. Dominique, however, merely smiled when asked about LTTE. A teenager nearby remarked: "We're for the Tigers." Most of those standing in the vicinity nodded their heads in confirmation.

A registered medical practitioner, Dr Ram Rattan, who lived close to the Lady of the Refuge Church, saw his house being ransacked by the Indian soldiers. The jewellery he had in the house was taken away. He quietly ignored questions asked about LTTE.

Even as newsmen were talking to the inmates of the refugee camp, armymen intervened to say that interviews were over because of the tight schedule they had on their hands. But one had a sneaking suspicion that men of the IPKF were reluctant to let the pressmen have a free and fair assessment of what the Tamils in Jaffna really thought of the Indian intervention. As an army officer privately admitted, "there's no way out except a political solution"

A doctor in the Jaffna hospital now under IPKF control said that when the force first arrived on the scene, none in Jaffna had believed that it would harm civilians. But after the IPKF launched its offensive against the Tigers, more and more people began having second thoughts. The doctor denied that there were Tigers holed up inside the Jaffna hospital.

After the Jaffna hospital was taken over, the IPKF sent army doctors to get the medical services running again. Top priority was given to removing the dead in the hospital. Next came the need to establish a rapport with the patients 'They were all huddled together in the corner of a room—patients as well as doctors. We really had to coax them to come out. It took a lot of effort to convince them that we meant no harm," said a doctor from the Army Medical Corps, who had been deputed to the hospital.

Some of the patients, he added, could be members of LTTE. "But we don't ask them such questions. Our job is to look after them and provide the best medical treatment, which we're doing."

To make sure that the IPKF was providing adequate medical aid to the injured in Jaffna, Major-General J.S. Chahal, one of the best known orthopaedic surgeons in the country, was himself placed as the head of the medical teams.

It was a colossal rehabilitation programme which the IPKF launched in the last week of October. Major-General A.S. Kalkat, who is overall in charge of the IPKF in Jaffna, explained: "Our operation has not only been military but also meant civil action on a gigantic scale." He added that most of the local doctors the IPKF had recruited were taken away by LTTE at gunpoint to look after its wounded cadres.

Major-General Kalkat admitted that civilians could have died in the fighting. LTTE, he said, had claimed that nearly 200 civilians had died in the shelling by the IPKF. Even if this were true, it was not too high a figure in a war which had been fought with such intensity, he maintained.

"But who is responsible for the civilian casualties? It is LTTE which turned the population into a human buffer," said the senior army officer.

Major-General Kalkat said that the IPKF wanted everyone, except the hard core, back in the mainstream. "We have apprehended some persons—nearly 100 in all. We're trying to sift the hard core from the rest."

It is essentially the function of a police force which the army has taken upon itself. This reporter strayed into the Jaffna police station, a short distance from the Dutch-built fort, only to be confronted by an army officer conducting an interrogation. "Who has allowed you to come here? You're not supposed to be here at all," he said. The officer, with a contingent of Maratha Light Infantry troops who had laid a ring round the police station, was obviously trying to ascertain whether the young men in their custody, most of them teenagers, had anything to do with the Tigers. Some of the teenagers begged for mercy with folded hands as the staccato of slaps landed across their faces.

Most IPKF officers are of the view that it was the mass suicide of the LTTE men on October 5 that set off the current crisis in the island nation. When they were taken into custody by the Sri Lankans, the Tigers had with them a handful of arms and three delayed action cyanide capsules. The moment the IPKF heard about the arrests an Indian army contingent virtually laid siege to the air force centre at Palaly where the Tigers were held.

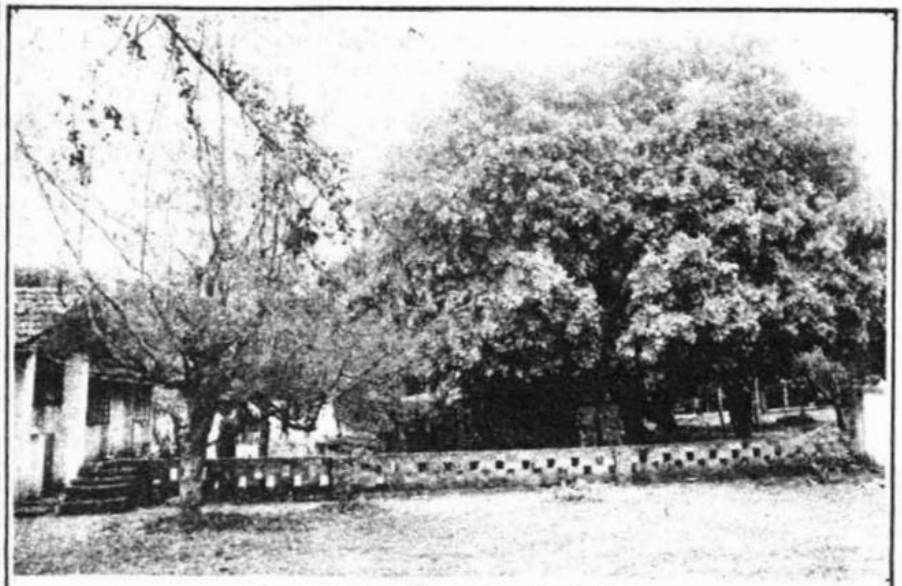
While the Sri Lankan forces insisted that the men would be flown to Colombo, the IPKF said that it would never allow that to happen. Messages passed between Jaffna, Delhi and Colombo. It was Delhi which asked the IPKF to call off the siege, a decision which many in the IPKF find inexplicable. Balasingham, in the meantime, had been able to slip in more cyanide capsules to the men in custody. The Tigers finally took the plunge when a Sri Lankan colonel announced to them that they were being taken to Colombo. Said an army officer: "It is the stuff of which movies are made. Why don't you ask someone to come and make a film on it?" What has led to the current Jaffna crisis is an unusual mix of the flippant and the tragic.

It was apparent by the first week of October that the IPKF would have to take on the insurgency in Jaffna, as the Tigers launched a brutal reprisal against the Sinhala civilians. Though the Sri Lankan forces provided logistics support—their sentry was among the first to be shot dead while on guard duty at the Jaffna Fort when fighting broke out on October 10—the brunt of the fighting has been borne by the IPKF. Remarked an army officer: "They (the Lankan forces) seem to be enjoying themselves. While here we go about in our battle fatigues; they are, as you can see for yourself, playing volleyball."

That it is an unpopular war the IPKF is fighting is clear. While a government spokesman denied reports which had appeared in a section of the press that Major-General Harkirat Singh, sent to Sri Lanka as the officer-in-charge of the IPKF, had been recalled, the IPKF personnel in Jaffna feel that the incident is symptomatic of what has gone wrong with the army operation. Explained an army officer: "He was recalled because the IPKF operation did not provide the dramatic results which the Indian government expected."

Other IPKF personnel were of the view that he was recalled because of his supposed proximity to the LTTE chief. But Harkirat Singh was one among several army officers who had a close working relationship with the LTTE cadre

When hostilities began, IPKF did not have sufficient rations for nearly five days. Almost everything had to be flown from India, to feed not only the soldiers but also the refugees.



The IPKF headquarters in Jaffna

before the hostilities between them broke out into the open. Major-General Harkirat Singh was expected to reach Jaffna and address the visiting newsmen on October 27, but he did not.

The command problems could not but have been accentuated by intelligence failure. According to an assessment prepared by the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), the military operations in Jaffna were to be over in three days. The external intelligence gathering agency had based its assessment on the information that LTTE had ammunition, supplied mostly by India, to last only two days. Senior army officials in Jaffna disclosed that they had time and again pointed out that it was an overly optimistic report. "Keeping in view the situation prevailing here, we had never set a time limit to the operation we were launching against LTTE. At no point of time had we committed to the government that the operation would be wrapped up in three days," said one officer.

As it turned out, LTTE has kept the fight going for more than a fortnight; it had been receiving arms from abroad, particularly Singapore, about which the Indian intelligence agency did not have the least idea. Besides, the intelligence supplied by the Sri Lankans was very poor, if not downright misleading, even about such elementary data as the terrain and the layout of roads.

Besides the lack of intelligence, the logistics presented a formidable problem. When the hostilities began, the IPKF did not have sufficient rations for nearly five days. Almost everything, including broiler chicken, had to be flown in from India. The IPKF has to feed not only its men but it has to feed refugees in the various camps. Several inmates at the Lady of Refuge Church pointed out that they were surviving on meagre rations—every day a family received one cup of dal and one cup of rice.

But the biggest obstacle the IPKF had to overcome was psychological. It had to take the offensive against erstwhile allies, it had to contend with a fast rising number of casualties, and face the horror such a conflict generated. Said an army doctor: "Every day in the army hospital at Palaly, we receive 25 to 30 casualties on an average. Death anywhere amounts the same thing to us—whether it is of a Tamil Tiger or of an Indian soldier brought to us on a stretcher. It is but natural for us to ask the question: is the sort of war we are fighting justified?"

It is evident that the IPKF sympathises with the plight of the people in Jaffna. This is one reason why the civilian population has hesitated from expressing an open resentment against a force which has virtually driven LTTE into a corner. "The people by and large are not hostile because they can see for themselves that we are only carrying out the orders issued to us. More than the army it is the politicians whom they are holding responsible for the mess in Jaffna," said a soldier.

The IPKF has, under the constraints that it has faced, done a splendid job. The war it has been fighting in Jaffna is not of its making. It was, as most of the soldiers believe, a war imposed upon them by two leaders of neighbouring nations with dwindling domestic support. The common subject of discussion is the dirty politics which has led to this impasse. The contradiction in the Indian policy, under which they had to operate, is obvious from the fact that the IPKF has gone all out to win the support of the Tamils in Jaffna, even as it has unleashed an operation to eliminate the LTTE with which the same masses identify.

For the IPKF the battle in Jaffna did come as a challenge. Sometimes the men had to put up with atrocious living conditions. "Come and see for yourself how we live. Sometimes our beds have to be made over ankle-deep water," remarked an army officer.

"Let an army come forward and do better than what we have done. We're proud of the way we have fought the battle," said an army commander. Having done that, it is now time for politicians to take over. Prabhakaran has already sent overtures to the Indian government and spelt out his conditions for peace: the LTTE leader would like the IPKF to go back to its positions as on October 9, followed by a 15-day ceasefire period, after which the Tigers would lay down their arms before the Indian army. An offer for the Indian government to evaluate.

NOV. 8–14, 1987 —G.K. SINGH in Jaffna

THE ORDEAL OF THE PEOPLE OF JAFFNA

REPORT

On 1st November, 1987, the Civil Rights Movement of Sri Lanka issued a statement which we carry in this issue in full for purposes of record :

"The Civil Rights Movement of Sri Lanka is appalled at the plight of the civilians of Jaffna, whose lives continue to be at risk and who are subject to great suffering and deprivation.

"In a recent statement 'The Island-Wide Violence after the Peace Accord' CRM referred to the situation of political detainees in the South of the country, and also to recent events in the North and East, including the failure to provide protection to Sinhala and Muslim residents in Trincomalee who were massacred and driven from their homes. Concerning the situation in Jaffna, this statement, issued ten days after the commencement of the Indian forces military offensive, referred to the difficulty of getting adequate or reliable information in many matters, and regretted in particular that the absence of press or other independent reports due to the refusal to allow journalists into Jaffna was serious drawback in assessing the situation.

"Though there are still many gaps and deficiencies in accessible information some press reports and first-hand account have since become available.

"At the beginning of the offensive, over 120,000 residents of the city of Jaffna were, according to an Indian High Commission spokesman, asked to report to three Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) 'checkpoints' — Nallur Kovil, Jaffna Hindu College and Hindu Ladies College (Daily News 12 October). It was reported that by 14 October nearly half the population of the Jaffna peninsula was displaced, 375,000 residents having sought refuge in schools, temples and kovils (interview with High Commission official, Sun 15 October).

"However these places of refuge were totally unprepared for such a vast influx. Reports of conditions in the Nallur Kovil, for instance, where an estimated 50,000 persons were camping out, many in the open, with only three toilets, are particularly appalling.

"The continuous curfew of over 12 days under which the peninsula was placed was another major cause of civilian distress. It is just not feasible to expect an entire population to remain indoors for days on end, without breaks to search for food, to take sick people for treatment, to bury the dead. It is inevitable that people will break such curfews after a time; if all 'curfew breakers' are preusmed to be combatants and shot on sight, many unjustifiable civilian deaths will then occur.

"Civilian deaths and injuries have occurred in the course of crossfire, as a result of serial attacks for instance at Chavakachcheri on 27 October, where an attack allegedly directed at a nearby LTTE installation left some 27 civilians dead and many more injured in the market place and bus stand. People have died in their homes and elsewhere as a result of shelling. One woman, a mother of six children, is reported to have been killed even in a place of refuge - Hindu Ladies College - as a result of aerial attack. How arbitrary or indiscriminate such attacks were, whether the LTTE was responsible for particular instances of shelling or the IPKF, how far such killing and injury was avoidable it is not possible for CRM to now assess. Nor is CRM at the moment dealing with allegations of reprisals and other misbehaviour by the IPKF, except to say that all these should be impartially investigated. For the movement CRM wishes to emphasise just the two factors mentioned earlier, namely the sudden mass displacement of the population without provision to care for it, and the continuous curfew. These indicate an unacceptable lack of preparation to fulfil basic obligations towards the civilian population; such preparation should have been given priority before the launching of any major military operation.

"There are clear international norms of conduct governing the protection of civilian populations in times of armed strife. Certain of these are to be found in the Geneva Conventions to which Sri Lanka and India are both parties; others are found in the Protocols Additional to those Conventions which they have not yer signed. What is relevant is not whether a particular provision is binding in terms of strict law in a given situation because one or the other party has not signed it. The provisions reflect universal principles of humane and decent conduct accepted by all civilised nations and our own people have a right to the benefit from these. We refer, for instance, to Article 17 of Protocol II which provides :

> Prohibition of forced movement of civilians
>
> The displacement of the civilian population shall not be ordered for reasons related to the conflict unless the security of the civilians involved or imperative military reasons so demand. Should such displacements have to be carried out, all possible measures shall be taken in order that the civilian population may be received under satisfactory conditions of shelter, hygiene, health, safety and nutrition.

"CRM stresses that it is and has always been the responsibility of the Government of Sri Lanka to ensure the safety of its citizens of all communities throughout the country. The Government has invited Indian assistance in order to implement the peace agreements. That the IPKF is now enforcing one of the terms of the agreement, i.e. to disarm the militants, does not absolve the Government from the responsibility of safeguarding the civilian population.

"CRM now calls upon the Sri Lankan and Indian Governments to review the nature of the present operation in order to absolutely minimise further damage to the civilian population; to explore other options for collecting arms and disarming militants which do not place the entire civilian population in jeopardy; to establish some form of impartial investigation of charges made against the IPKF and to take measures that will restore the momentum towards a negotiated political solution.

"CRM calls upon the Government of Sri Lanka to ensure immediate relief to the civilian population of Jaffna and to take all steps towards their speedy rehabilitation. CRM repeats yet again its appeal that the Government accept the offer of the International Committee of the Red Cross to perform the full range of its services in Sri Lanka."

THE HINDU

IPKF will go ahead with its job: Minister

IN PARLIAMENT

NEW DELHI, Nov. 11.

The Minister of State for External Affairs, Mr. Natwar Singh, today firmly ruled out any unilateral ceasefire in Northern Sri Lanka and said the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) would go ahead with the job of disarming the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

Mr. Singh was replying to a two-day special debate on the Sri Lankan situation in the Lok Sabha where members took, in the words of Mr. Singh, "a multi-dimensional look" at the Indo-Sri Lankan agreement. The DMK member, Mr. N. V. N. Somu, walked out in protest after Mr. Singh concluded his reply. "Stop killing Tamils. Order ceasefire," Mr. Somu shouted as he left the House.

The Minister said, "We are quite clear in our minds that the task assigned to the IPKF has to be completed in the larger interest."

Mr. Natwar Singh said the Indo-Sri Lanka agreement sought to ensure that "our environment remains free from outside interference." "It would not be in our interest if Sri Lanka is to become a cockpit of superpower rivalry, or rivalry among other countries." Nor would it be in India's interest if countries not friendly to India were to get a stronghold there," he said.

India wanted that the military activity thrust on it was terminated as soon as possible so that the political process and reconstructon work could start in Sri Lanka and the necessary administrative arrangements and the economic blueprint could be made.

Not an accord in haste: Mr. Natwar Singh said the July 29 agreement was not made in haste. Many weeks of hard work at various levels had gone into it. All doubts raised by critics of the agreement had been allayed and provision made for every eventuality.

"Since agreements are made by human beings," he said, "if there was any constructive suggestion to improve it, we can do so," Mr. Natwar Singh said.

Ill-informed judgments: It was easy to pass ill-informed judgments on the agreement. But it had been acclaimed the world over as an act of statesmanship on the part of the Indian Prime Minister and the President of Sri Lanka.

Not one of the critics of the agreement had come out with a viable alternative. "It is easy to be critical, but difficult to be creative." One should take a look at the map of South Asia to see what responsibility geography placed on India. "We can't shy away from our responsibility."

If one looked at the situation in a balanced and dispassionate manner, the Minister said, one would see that what was at stake in Sri Lanka were the rights of the Tamils, the unity and territorial integrity of Sri Lanka and the security environment in the region. In signing the agreement—for which there was no example in recent history—both sides realised what was at stake.

Complicated work: Referring to the criticism that the time-table envisaged in the agreement was not being kept, Mr. Natwar Singh said this was a most complex and complicated exercise. There might be some hurdles and imponderables.

If the LTTE was willing to abide by the agreement then it should lay down arms and for this purpose contact the IPKF. "But this is not happening ... And the task of the IPKF has to be completed in the interest of the implementation of the agreement."

The IPKF came on the scene because the militants had refused to lay down arms to the Sri Lankan army and preferred to do so only to an Indian force. "The expectation after the symbolic public laying down of arms was that the process would continue smoothly ... but the LTTE reneged on the agreement. What it now wants is incomprehensible," Mr. Natwar Singh said, throwing up his hands.

All Tamil groups consulted: The Minister reiterated that all Tamil groups were consulted and kept informed of developments when signing the agreement. "Moreover, every single doubt of Mr. Prabakaran was set at rest by the Prime Minister when they met in New Delhi." The agreement was signed by the Governments of India and Sri Lanka because all earlier accords that Colombo had reached with the Tamil ethnic groups had failed.

adventurism for the political benefit of the Sri Lankan's President Mr. J. R. Jayewardene.

In an emotional speech Mr. N. V. N. Somu (DMK) asked why the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) had resorted to strafing, area bombardment and helicopter gunships and other weapons to disarm a small band of the Tamils, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). It was a "shame" that the marvellous Indian army which had an excellent record has now been reduced to a mercenary force and its image tarnished to satisfy the "ego of one man." Besides, the bombing of a hospital and university was a serious violation of the peace accord, he alleged.

Mr. Somu, whose speech was heard in silence, compared the LTTE's role to the Mukti Bahini Bangladesh which had spearheaded the liberation struggle in that country. Although the people in erstwhile East Pakistan had not clamoured for an independent State, India intervened and created Bangladesh. But in Sri Lanka, the Tamils who were fighting against all odds for their cause were being "butchered and called terrorists." He described the IPKF as "the innocent people killing force."

"Double standards": Urging the Government to give up its "double standards" in dealing with a similar situation in two different countries, Mr. Somu called for an immediate ceasefire to give a chance to the Tamils.

Mr. Ram Bahadur Singh (Janata) said it was unfortunate that the peace accord had turned out to be a military solution instead of a political solution.

Mr. Saifuddin Soz (NC) wanted to know why the LTTE was not made a party to the agreement signed with Sri Lanka. Although the objectives of the accord were laudable, it could involve India in a long-drawn out battle.

Sinhala colonisation not stopped: Mr. Datta Samant (Ind) pleaded with the Government to heed the sentiments and feelings of the Tamil militants who had been fighting tooth and nail for a cause for so many years. They had been deprived of their democratic rights since 1978 and their status reduced to that of second class citizens. But the Government of India reached an accord ignoring all their aspirations. It had also failed to stop the colonisation of the Eastern province by the Sinhalese. The Government should give up its adamant attitude and resume negotiations with Mr. V. Prabakaran, LTTE leader, he said.

Mr. P. Namgyal (Cong-I) said the agreement showed an important development of change of attitude towards the Tamils on the part of the Sri Lankan Government. He thought a unilateral ceasefire would not be good as it would give opportunity to the LTTE to regroup. UNI

DMK member warns of "seeds of disintegration"

NEW DELHI, Nov. 11.

Opposition members in the Rajya Sabha led by Mr. V. Gopalasamy (DMK) today called for a ceasefire by the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) in Sri Lanka.

Initiating a short-duration discussion on the Sri Lankan issue raised by Mr. Gopalasamy and 40 others, the DMK member questioned the reluctance on the part of the Indian Government to offer ceasefire.

Mr. Gopalasamy wanted to know if the LTTE leader, Mr. V. Prabakaran had made any authoritative request to the Indian Government on November 6 calling for a ceasefire. During the 50-minute speech, he time and again referred to the alleged atrocities committed by the IPKF in Jaffna which was objected to by the ruling party members.

The Minister of State for External Affairs, Mr. K. Natwar Singh, urged the Vice-Chairman, Mr. H. Hanumanthappa to ask Mr. Gopalasamy to withdraw the allegation. Mr. Gopalasamy refused to do so.

Mr. Anand Sharma and Mr. V. Narayanaswamy (both Cong-I) raised points of order objecting to Mr. Gopalasamy's allegation which they said was based on "distorted facts".

Mr. Gopalasamy warned that any failure to solve the Sri Lankan issue would sow the "seeds of disintegration" in the minds of Tamils in India. He demanded the Government to substantiate its charge that the LTTE went back on its commitments and that it had wrecked the Indo-Sri Lanka agreement. The IPKF must pull back to the October 9 position so that killings were ended and a ceasefire declared forthwith.

PM criticised: Mounting an attack on the Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, for his statement in Parliament on the situation in the island, Mr. Gopalasamy said it was not the LTTE which was responsible for the prevailing tragic situation but the Sri Lankan President, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene with whom the Indo-Sri Lanka agreement of July 29 was signed.

He accused the Government of India of "betraying" the interests of Tamils in Sri Lanka. This unkindest cut of all has come from the most unexpected quarter (India)." He urged the Prime Minister to substantiate the charges he had levelled against the LTTE and its leader, Mr. Prabakaran.

At the outset, Mr. Gopalasamy said the LTTE was never a party to the agreement signed between Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Jayewardene. Till date, the Government of India had not clarified this point.

The member reminded the House that contrary to Mr. Gandhi's statement, the Sri Lankan Government had not conceded the legitimate demands of Tamils for a traditional homeland and right of self-determination.

Angry retorts from treasury benches: Mr. Gopalasamy's charge that the IPKF has committed "genocide" as per press reports, sparked angry protests from the treasury benches.

Several Opposition members including Mr. T. R. Balu (DMK) came to the rescue of Mr. Gopalasamy as ruling party members protested. The Minister of State for External Affairs, Mr. Natwar Singh, was on his feet saying that this remark should be withdrawn. Mr. Gopalasamy: I will not.

Mr. Gopalasamy said the suicide incident involving high ranking LTTE leaders triggered the militant's group confrontation with the IPKF in Jaffna. Mr. Prabakaran had written a letter to the Prime Minister via the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, Mr. M. G. Ramachandran, that the LTTE was willing to cease fire. He wanted to know whether such a communication had been received from the LTTE leader.

LETTER

PeaceInSriLanka

Sir,—As one who was earlier deeply sceptical of the enforcement of the Indo-Sri Lanka agreement, I now fear that India is getting into a Vietnam-like situation in Sri Lanka.

In effect (if not also intentionally) the Sri Lankan government has transferred to India the burden of a solution to their Tamil problem. While the Indian people are sympathetic to such of the demands of the Sri Lankan Tamils which are within the framework of the Sri Lankan constitution why should Indian armed forces get bogged down in Sri Lanka indefinitely or await the decision of President Jayewardene to throw out Indian forces from Sri Lanka?

Also, now that it seems that the more important of the Tamil groups have indicated by their actions that they care little for the continued presence of the Indian Peace-Keeping Force (IPKF), I think India ought to withdraw the force on its own, before it is too late.

If this amounts to India reneging on the agreement with Sri Lanka, so be it. It is better to admit a mistake and to cut one's losses before it becomes too late to retrieve the situation.

M. S. RAJAN

New Delhi.

Times of India, 10.11.87.

Sudhir Dar, The Hindustan Times

AFFIDAVIT

THANGATHIRAVIAM wife of Shesuger Fernando (48) Old Market Road, Mathagal

I am the only child of my late mother Rasammah Rasadurai.

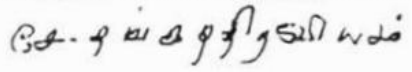
On 8.11.87 IPKF were advancing towards Mathagal when I with my children and late mother fled from our home for refuge at St. Thomas Church.

On the way a shell fell in proximity and exploded.

Shrapnels darting from the blast caused severe abdominal injuries where she fell. She succumbed to her injuries before a medical officer could be summoned.

Her dead body was buried in the compound of a relative closeby.

My mother was 65 year old and my father has already pre-deceased her.



THIRUGNANASAMBANTHAR PARAMESWARAN (18), of 442 K.K.S. Road, Jaffna.

The deceased Kanagasabai Thirugnanasambanthar (64) is my father. He was a retired District Land Officer.

My father K. Thirugnanasambanthar left house at about 8.30 a.m. on 8.11.87 taking with him Rs. 3,000/- to buy certain items and settle some debts.

Almost immediately after my father left an explosion was heard followed by gun fire.

Following this incident curfew was declared in our residential area for an indefinite period. As such we could not go in search of him.

When the curfew was lifted a search was made and we traced my father's bicycle at Nachchimarkovilady.

On further inquiries it was revealed that my father had been shot dead by the IPKF on 8.11.87 on the K.K.S. Road, Jaffna; and that his dead body had been buried by the people of that area.

A gold chain, 2 gold rings, a wrist watch and cash to the value of Rs. 28,000/- were in the possession of my father at the time of his unfortunate death.

ANNAMALAR, wife of Sellathamby Thurairajah (83) Alaveddy South, Alaveddy.

I am the above-named affirmant and mother of the late Thurairajah Jeyarajah killed in shell blast on 9.11.87. He was unmarried.

On 9.11.87 at about 1.00 p.m. when my son was returning home on his push cycle after his usual coconut trade at Pandateruppu Market, a shell fell close to him on the road and exploded.

Shrapnels darting from the shell-blast struck him causing severe bleeding injuries on his chest, head and abdomen. He fell dead on the spot.

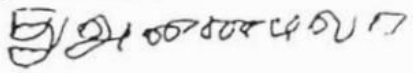
On receipt of the information regarding his death. I and my relatives ran to the scene, half a mile away, and found he was lying dead in a pool of blood and his bicycle was fallen on the road, badly damaged.

The dead body of my son was taken home and later cremated at the Alaveddy Crematorium at about 5.00 p.m. on 9.11.87.

My husband is a T.B. patient and is not an earning member of the family.

My late son was the family bread-winner.

He earned an average monthly income of Rs. 1000/-.



ANNAMMAH NALLIAH (54) Veladi, Kopay North, Kopay.

The deceased Murugesu Nalliah aged 58 years was my husband.

He was the principal of the Sravanabhavanander Vidyalaya Kopay at the time he met his tragic end.

Due to the October 1987 military offensive we left our residence and went to Madduvil for safety.

On 9.11.87 we returned to our residence.

On 10.11.87 at about 2 p.m. my husband left our house saying that he is going to his school which is about quarter mile distance from our house.

At about 3.15 p.m. I was informed that my husband was seriously injured during a shell blast.

I went to the place of incident on hearing the grave news.

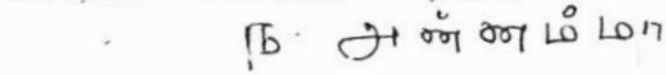
He had many deep wounds on his body caused by the shell shrapnels.

He died a little later.

His cremation took place in a nearby field on 11.11.87.

I have a daughter Jeyagowri aged 25 years.

After my husband's demise we do not have any income.



APPUTHURAI PARARAJASINGHAM (63) Suthumalai Road, Thavadi, Kokuvil.

The deceased person Pararajasingham Yogarajah, aged 20 years was my son.

He was a vegetable vendor.

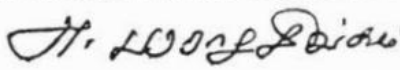
On 9.11.87 at about 6.00 a.m. my son left for Pandaterrippu in his bicycle saying that he is going there regarding his vegetable business.

At about 6.00 p.m. on the same day I was informed that my son was shot and killed by the army at Navaly at about 7.00 a.m.

On hearing the news I rushed to Navaly and found my son's body lying on the roadside with gunshot wounds.

I cremated the body on the same day itself at Navaly Cemetery.

My late son was our sole breadwinner as I am old and feeble and unable to work as before.



BUWANESWARY (51) widow of the late Sundaram Nadarajah, 253 Sangarapillai Road, Anaicoddai.

My late husband Sundaram Nadarajah was in business running an establishment at the house where the goods in trade were stocked.

Anaicoddai was subjected to military operation and shell attacks and tension prevailed in the area. On or about the 15th October 1987 I and my family including my late husband moved away from our home and took refuge in the Murugamoorthy Temple at Navaly.

My late husband occasionally visited our house to ensure against thefts of household effects and goods in trade.

On 9.11.87 my late husband Nadarajah while returning to the temple in the evening from our house was shot dead about 300 yards away from the house. He died on the spot.

My husband's body was removed from the place of the incident and placed on the verandah of a house closeby.

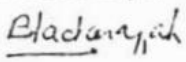
I received the information regarding my husband's death late in the evening but it was not possible for me to have visited the scene immediately.

I with my children visited my house at Anaicoddai in the morning on 10.11.87 where the corpse of my husband has already been brought and placed.

He received gunshot injuries on his back and on his legs near ankle.

The corpse of my late husband was cremated in an open land close to my house at about 10 a.m. on 10.11.88.

My husband was in receipt of an average income of Rs. 2000/- per mensum.



KANDIAH SIVALINGAM (42) Suthumalai West, Manipay

The deceased Sivalingam Sivarajeen (9) is my son. He was a student in grade 3 of Suthumalai Sinniyabara Vidyalayam, Manipay.

On 9.11.87 at about 6.30 a.m. when my son S. Sivarajeen was standing in our front compount a mortar shell fell close to him and exploded.

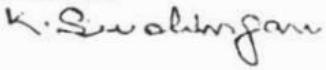
Fragments from the explosion caused multiple injuries on both legs of my son Sivarajeen.

Sivarajeen was immediately rushed to General Hospital, Jaffna and was admitted to ward 9 A.

Sivarajeen succumbed to his injuries a short while after his admission.

My daughter Sharmini (11) also sustained injuries in this incident.

Cremation of the dead body of my son Sivarajeen took place the same day evening at Kombayan Manel Crematorium.



PARARAJASINGHAM PUVANESWARY (52)
Sandilipay centre, Sandilipay.

I am a teacher.

My late husband Muthiah Pararajasingham aged 53 years was also a teacher at Sandilipay Mahavidyalayam.

On 9.11.87 at 8 a.m. shells fell on the Kalvalai Pillayar Temple at Sandilipay. 4 persons Sivagurul Gunaratnam, Sanmugavadivel and Thanaledchumy were injured. My late husband rushed them in Car Number EY 5573 to the Tellipallai Hospital.

At about 1.30 p.m. the same day my husband came back home in the same car and informed me that some patients who had to be removed to the Jaffna General Hospital from Tellipallai were in the Car and that they had obtained the necessary permit to proceed to Jaffna. He then left in Car.

My husband did not return home that night.

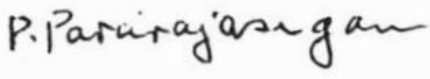
On 10.11.87 at 7 a.m. I was informed by Subramaniam of Kaddudai also a member of the staff of the Sandilipay Mahavidiyalayam that my husband and 5 others in the car had been shot dead at Navaly on 9.11.87 by the Indian Forces.

We proceeded to Navaly at 8 a.m. where I found the dead body of my husband along with those of K. Gunaratnam K. Thanaledhumy, K. Sriranganathan K. Valliammal and of the Driver K. Thanabalasingam.

All the six dead bodies were cremated at Navaly on 10.11.87.

I was informed by one Peter who is a teacher that on 9.11.87 when he was at the Navaly Church as a refugee he had seen a car passing by being fired at by Indian Troops and that when he went up to the car after the troops had left the area he had seen my husband and all others dead in the car.

I have a son aged 22 years and 3 daughters aged 21, 19 and 6 years. None of them are married.



PAKIANATHAN RITAMMAH (47) Atchuvely North, Atchuvely.

The deceased Thevasagayam Pakianathan, age 55 years was my husband.

The deceased was a businessman at the time of his death.

On 9.11.87 hearing army reprisals we took refuge inside the St. Antony's Church, Atchuvely.

After sometime I left the Church and returned to our home leaving my husband to help some people to bury a person killed by the army on the previous day.

Later someone came and told us that my husband was shot and killed by the army at Valai along with three other people.

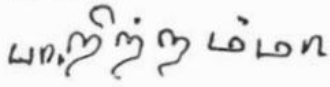
I went to the spot and found my husband's dead body and removed it to our house with the help of some others.

His body was buried on 10.11.87.

I have two unmarried daughters;

We were depending on my husband's sole income for support.

Now we find it very difficult to support my family.



IYADURAI THANGATHURAI (36) Mullaiyady Veethy, Chankanai East, Pandateruppu.

The deceased Poopathy Veluppillai, aged 61 years a widow **was my aunti.** (Mother's sister).

She was living with me at the above address for the last twenty years since her husband's death under my care and protection.

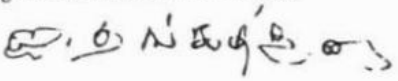
Due to heavy shell fire during the military operation of the IPKF on 10.11.87, I sought refuge along with married sister and her children at Murugan Kovil leaving behind my aunt Mrs. V. Poopathy as she was sick and bed - ridden.

At about 11.00 a.m. when shell fire ceased I visited my house in order to remove my Aunti to the above Murugan temple where we sought refuge.

But to my dismay I found that she was dead due to the shell attack and I noticed a deep cut injury on her chest.

We cremated her dead body at Vilaveli Cemetery at 3.00 p.m. the same day.

My house too was badly damaged due to the above shell blast.



JOVAMPILLAI SEBASTIAMPILLAI (40)
Senthankulam, Illavalai.

I am a fisherman.

My wife, children and I were living in our house at the above said address.

Indian Peace Keeping Force at Kankesanturai moved towards our locality in heavy vehicles, gun carriers and jeeps on 10.11.87.

While moving they fired shells from the gun carriers on both sides of the roads.

Through fear, people living along the main road sides fled to safer places.

My father-in-law and his family too sought refuge at my house, which is quarter mile away from the main road.

A shell fired from the gun carrier fell on two houses away from our house and exploded.

On hearing this explosion, my family and my father-in-law's family started praying in our hall

While we were praying a shell pierced through the concrete wall and exploded in the hall.

Shrapnels from this explosion killed my wife S. Viveenamma age 30 years and my sister-in-law Ceysilta and injured my three children and mother-in-law.

The dead bodies of my wife and sister-in-law were buried the following morning at 10 a.m.

The injured persons were treated locally as continuous curfew was in force.

After burial, we sought refuge at Ilavalai.

NAGESWARY MOGANANATHAN (32) Vattu East, Sithankerny.

The deceased Thambirajah Mogananathan, aged 32 was my husband.

He was vegetable vendor.

On 10.11.87 my husband left home at about 9. a.m saying that he is going to Thavadi to sell vegetables.

Later I came to know that he was shot and injured by the army at Thavadi.

He was brought home by relatives.

He died on the same day.

His body was cremated at the Vattu East cemetery 11.11.87.

I have one son named Thanurasu aged 6 years.

My daughter Thathayini, aged 24 years died within fifteen days of my husband's death.

I do not have income or support

PONNIAH SIVAPATHALINGAM
9, Arasady Lane, Jaffna.

On 10.11.87 the IPKF going along Jaffna Manipay road entered my father's house and opened fire as a result my father living in the house NO. 821 Manipay road (Alady junction) received a gun shot and died. I was not able to go there on 10.11.87 as there was army movement on that day.

On the following day 11.11.87 I went there and found the house burnt and the dead body of my father partially burnt.

I am attaching the death certificate No. 1304 issued by the Registrar of deaths. Cause of death; Death due to gun shot injuries.

SINNATHANGAM, widow of the late Mr. Sinnathamby Ponniah, at Kalamparai, Kopay North, Kopay.

I have been living with my husband and children at the above address which is my own house and property.

At the time, the worse situation prevailed in Jaffna on and after the 10th of October 1987, there was tension and panic amongst the people of the area and in the suburbs, and all were fleeing away from their residences.

At the military operation's escalation to our area my husband Sinnathamby Ponniah, - aged 65 - was caught in a cross-fire, sustained injuries and succumbed to death on 12-11-1987.

My husband was the only bread-winner of my family and as a result of his death, we have now been driven into utter starvation; immense hardships, and are now displaced.

SINNATHAMBY NAGAMUTHU (52) Pothipulam Mathagal North.

The deceased Nagan Sinnathamby aged 56 years was my husband.

He was a Fisherman.

On 10.11.87 at about 9 a.m. my husband left our house for the nearby seashore for fishing.

At about 11 a.m. we heard a gunshot sound close to our house.

At about 12 noon I came to know that my husband was shot and killed by the army.

His body was found close to our house with gunshot wounds.

It was cremated at Pothipulam cemetery a few yards from our house on 11.11.87.

My children and I have been deprived of the maintenance and support we received from my husband.

We do not have any income and lost most of our belongings during the disturbances and undergoing untold hardships.

I pray for relief.

THILLAINATHAN RAJALUXUMI (37) Thavadi North, Kokuvil.

The deceased child Thillainathan Ushananthini, aged 14 years was my daughter.

She was a student at the Hindu Tamil Kalavan School, Thavadi.

On 10.11.87 at about 4.30 p.m. a shell fell on my house roof and exploded.

My daughter was injured in the blast.

She died on her way to the Hospital.

Her body was cremated by the Hospital Authorities.

I have four sons, my late daughter being the only female child.

VAITHI VALLI (67). a widow, Kesan, Urumpirai North, Urumpirai.

I am the wife of the late Kandan Vaithi (81).

At about 7 a.m. on 10.11.87 my late husband and I proceeded to our plot of land situated closeby.

At about 8 a.m. the same day IPKF personnel, who suddenly came into our plot opened fire at random.

I fell on the ground and feigned dead.

Immediately after the IPKF left I looked at my husband and found him dead with gun shot injuries on his chest.

The dead body of my husband was removed home and buried on 11.11.87 at the Urumpirai Colony Cremotarium as facilities for cremation were not available that day.

All my children are married and are living separately.

I have lost my husband and breadwinner and appeal for assistance.

When IPKF opened fire on 10.11.87 one Nadarasa who was in an adjoining plot of land was also killed.

Hundreds join hands against IPKF role

NEWS

From Our Staff Reporter

COIMBATORE, Nov.11.

People from different walks of life linked hands to form a human chain through the main streets of Coimbatore for a distance of about 10 km, starting and ending at Town Hall.

This was to protest against the military action of the Indian Peace Keeping Force in Sri Lanka and the agitation was sponsored by the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam. Hundreds of party volunteers, advocates, traders, teachers and students formed the "human chain" in the middle of the road for 30 minutes.

They shouted slogans against the action by the IPKF against the LTTE and demanded withdrawal of IPKF. Messrs. M. Kannappan, district secretary of the DMK, A. Natarajan, MLA, M. Ramanathan,C.T. Dhandapani, and Era. Mohan,were among those who joined the human chain formation.The police diverted traffic at some places.

Students of many schools and colleges in and around Coimbatore today attended classes wearing black-edged cards condeming the IPKF action in Sri Lanka.

Reports of such protest were received from other towns throughout Tamil Nadu.

MADURAI: About 3,000 persons joined the demonstration on Alagarkovil Road from the Periyar statue at Tallukulam here and around the four Veli Streets.

The president of the Tamil Nadu Kamaraj Congress, Mr. P. Nedumaran, was among those who participated in the agitation. Mr. Muturamalingam, MLA and Mr. Vijayakanth, actor went in an open jeep along the route. A joint appeal by the Dravida Kazhagam leader, Mr. K. Veeramani and the Tamil Nadu Kamaraj Congress here today said that the Tamil Nadu Assembly should resolve that the Indian Peace Keeping Force should stop the wars with LTTE and start negotiations. This appeal was made to all MLAs.

The appeal referred to Sri Lanka President, Mr.Jayewardene's threatening statements about interim government and banning of LTTE.

VELLORE: Hundreds of volunteers, mostly DK and DMK workers, participated in a human-chain demonstration in Vellore and its outskirts on Wednesday.

Though the chain was not continuous, the demonstrators formed human chains at several stretches on the 10-km route from Thorappadi to Sathuvachari. They raised slogans demanding a cease fire by the IPKF in Sri Lakna. The agitation did not hinder traffic.

KANCHEEPURAM: The response to the call given by the DMK and its allies in the district headquarters for the "human chain" protest against the IPKF action in Sri Lanka was poor in Kancheepuram. Less than 1000 participated in human chains formed in the middle of roads at three different areas — the longest was from the municipal office to the bus stand, in which 500 participated.

Two other smaller chains were formed at Gandhi Road from the temple car stand to the Javulikadai Chatram and from Sankara Mutt to Kumarakottam. After shouting slogans for 30 minutes they dispersed.

e satanic force

Certainly, INDIA TODAY was eyewitness to one incident when Mi-24 helicopter gunships bombed and strafed the town of Chavakacheri, 32 km east of Jaffna and 20 civilians were killed. The Indian Government first denied that helicopter gunships were being used in an offensive operational role. Once it became clear that the eyewitness reports would appear in the Indian press, they finally admitted that the incident had taken place but still claim that it is the only one of its kind. They also claimed that only an "isolated building" where suspected Tigers were hiding had been shelled. INDIA TODAY was witness to the fact that shells had landed in the main marketplace and the main bus-stand where large numbers of civilians had gathered.

The Tigers, in their propaganda war from Jaffna, claimed that over 200 civilians have been killed by the IPKF and numerous buildings, including the Jaffna Hospital, destroyed. The Catholic Church in Jaffna has put the number of civilian deaths at 100. Some western journalists who entered Jaffna after the battle started, have returned with horror stories of IPKF troops going berserk after their comrades were killed and accused them of shooting innocent people and of raping Tamil women. The Tigers refer to the IPKF as the Innocent People Killing Force.

The Globe and Mail

REPORT BRYAN JOHNSON

Jaffna coverage refutes war tale

The dead Indian soldier, his helmet lying in a crimson pool, gazes sightless from every newsstand in this country. And the full-color photo in India Today magazine competes for shelf space with a half-dozen other cover stories on the same grisly subject.

The war in Sri Lanka may not yet be India's Vietnam, but the impact on the home front is eerily similar to the United States in the late 1960s.

Few Indian readers - of the vast Englsih-language press or its even larger counterpart in regional tongues - can ignore the lurid, detailed accounts of the Jaffna fighting. Much of the coverage is slavishly pro-government and jingoistic, but a few brilliant exceptions match the best war journalism produced anywhere.

When the village of Chavakacheri was strafed by Indian gunships two weeks ago, New Delhi blithely maintained that its "deep concern for civilians" prevented any such use of airpower. The bureaucrats didn't reckon with a courageous Calcutta reporter, who endured the attack and splashed it across the front pages of The Telegraph.

After a day of denials, the military finally conceded its helicopters had blasted the village with rockets. But it was billed as a surprise attack on a Tamil Tiger base camp, with devastating effect on militants and no harm to civilians.

Wrong again. The Indian journalist had seen two dozen men, women and children killed in the assault. And an India Today photographer captured that and other grotesque tableaux in a spectacular photo spread.

In one shot, a grinning Tiger guerrilla stands among six bullet-riddled Indian corpses, waving happily to readers on the subcontinent. Another photo shows 13 bodies of dead Chavakacheri civilians, lined up on a sidewalk, beside their grieving relatives.

Equally powerful is the laconic description that photogrpapher Shyam Tekwani penned to accompany the layout. He describes the Tigers' "pulling out chocolate from the shirt pocket of a bloody corpse and passing it around while idly kicking at the remains of a human brain."

Mr. Tekwani — unlike Western reporters in Jaffna — was not on an Indian-guided daytrip to the battle zone. And his reports contradict the standard press picture of a dispirited Tiger pump, barely hanging on against the world's fourth largest army.

The Tigers' "confidence and exuberance... are remarkable," he noted. "In the middle of all-out war, it appears unreal to hear them laughing and jabbering away like the kids they are... Like a group of boys playing cops and robbers" with real bullets.

On the key point of mainstream Tamil support for the guerrillas, the photographer is unequivocal: "There is no mistaking the complete identification of the Jaffna civilians with the (Tiger) fighters."

That claim is contradicted daily in most Indian newspapers, which echo their government's version of events on Sri Lanka's northern peninsula. The Hindu, for instance, repeatedly informs its readers of the "lack of popular support" and "pressure of public opinion" which have brought the 2,500 man Tiger army to a "collapse of organised resistance.

The newspaper, a Madras-based national daily with a large readership among India's own Tamils, has suddenly turned turtle in its coverage of the conflict. The paper had unparalleled access to the Tigers during the four years they were backed by India, and it produced numerous on-the-spot exclusives.

Now that the Tigers are villains, The Hindu reports on Jaffna public opinion from New Delhi — based on daily briefings at the foreign ministry.

But even the most blatant attempts to blacken the guerrillas can be illuminating. Only Indian reporters have access to the wounded soldiers recuperating here. And their accounts of the "shameless" Tiger use of women and children is unwitting testimony to the extraordinary depth of civilian commitment.

"Women and children, too, fired at us," one astonished Indian soldier told a local magazine. "Even 8-year-old children and pregnant women are armed."

LTTE shells hospital

DELHI, Oct. 23

The IPKF did not return the fire as it wanted to avoid damage and casualties. After the hospital was captured, the LTTE sent radio messages calling for heavy mortar fire around the boundary wall of the hospital. The spokesperson did not give casualty figures but said the IPKF doctors were attending to the sick and wounded in the hospital.

NEW DELHI, Oct. 29.

For the first time, the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) has strafed two locations in Chavakacheri town, a LTTE stronghold east of Jaffna, which it later captured, according to an official report here today.

Some 27 bodies of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) militants were found in the area.

THE HINDU

Co-ordinating Committee of
Citizens' Committees of the
Northern and Eastern Provinces
Y.M.C.A. Building
Jaffna 9-11-1987

Hon. Rajiv Gandhi
The Prime Minister of India

Dear Revered Excellency,

This hour of extreme peril and eminent extermination of the Tamil people of Sri Lanka has come as the inevitable sequence to the military operation of the Indian Peace Keeping Force against LTTE. We wish to place before you the following facts for your kind consideration and immediate action.

There is no electricity nor lighting fuel, no exchange and flow of money owing to closure of all banks and all sections of the people are deprived of their monthly income and daily wages. The continued artillery shelling, interspersed aerial bombing and helicopter strafing has driven the whole population from their homes abandoning all their possessions. There are chaos and utter confusion among the entire people and they are in the grip of fear and apprehension, worst of all the people have no place or facilities to take even the gravely wounded for treatment as all hospitals remain closed.

Your excellency would have been appraised at the indefinite curfew imposed throughout the Jaffna peninsula from the 10th of last month by the Indian Peace Keeping Force. This operation against LTTE has brought to standstill all economic activities of the Tamil People of Jaffna and the entire population faces complete starvation and slow death. All transport has been paralysed cutting off supply lines of food commodities from Colombo and other places and distribution of existing stocks of food.

The Jaffna Government Hospital which has been catering day and night for all urgent cases from all parts of the Jaffna peninsula remains permanently under the IPKF control and there is no access whatsoever to this provincial hospital to the needy patients.

The Jaffna Hospital came under heavy fire from the IPKF on the Deepavali day, that is the 21st of October. It is with great regret and grave concern that we are forced to bring to your kind notice that on the attack made by the Peace Keeping Force 3 doctors, the Matron of the Hospital, 3 senior nurses, 2 overseers, the ambulance driver, the telephone operator, the lift operator, the store keeper and eleven minor employees and about 100 patients and their relations were shot dead. Following this attack, all the supervisory medical officers and all other staff have kept away from work out of fear. The whole hospital administration has collapsed and the hospital remains inaccessible to the public. All the doctors and staff of the hospital will give evidence if an impartial inquiry is held. The names of the hospital staff killed are as follows:

Medical Officers

1. Dr. A. Sivapathasundaram
   Paediatrician
2. Mr. M.J. Ganesharatnam
3. Dr. Parimelalagar

Matron

4. Mrs. Vadivelu

Nurses

5. Mrs. Leelawathi
6. Miss. M. Ramanathan
7. Miss. Sivapackiam

Ambulance Driver

8. Mr. V. Shanmugalingam

Telephone Operator

9. Mr. Kanagalingam

Overseers

10. Mr. K. Krishnarajah
11. Mr. K. Selvarajah

Minor Employees

12. Mr. R. Sukumar
13. Mr. Sivalogathan
14. Mr. Marutharajah
15. Mr. John Peter
16. Mr. Markandu
17. Mr. Thurairajah
18. Mr. Sivarasa
19. Mr. Jeganathan
20. Mr. K. Vedaraniyam
21. Mr. R. Ratnarajah

The above are some of the grave hardships mercilessly imposed on an innocent peace loving people who have been looking forward to your Excellency's help for deliverence from the atrocities and gruesome killings by Sri Lankan armed forces. The entire population of Jaffna has reached the last minute of their power of evidence and we have recourse all into providence, if Your Excellency does not come to our rescue immediately.

We, therefore, appeal to your Excellency, to your sense of even justice, to your concern for the preservation of human rights and to your unfailing faith in the peaceful solutions of all problems to order an immediate ceasefire and employ more peaceful and suitable political measures to enforce the acceptance of the peace accord by LTTE and rendering their aims.

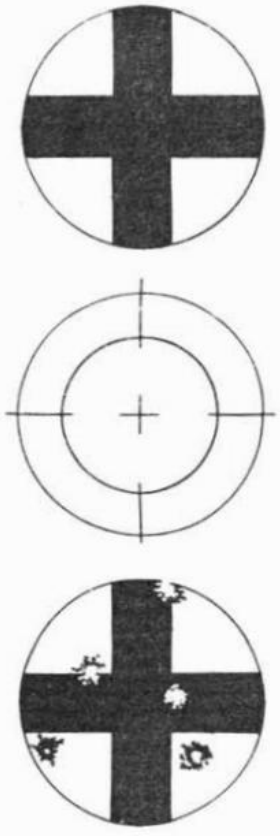
yours faithfuly,

President S. ARUNASALAM

Secy. S. SIVANANDARAJAH

Coordinating Committee of the Citizens Committees

The Jaffna Hospital came under heavy fire from IPKF on the Deepavali Day, that is the 21st of October. It is with great regret and grave concern that we are forced to bring to your kind notice that on the attack made by the Peace Keeping Force 3 doctors, the matron of the Hospital, 3 senior nurses, 2 overseers, the ambulance driver, the telephone operator, the lift operator, the store keeper and eleven minor employees and about 100 patients and their relations were shot dead.



THE HINDU

'Try diplomacy to bring LTTE round'

IN PARLIAMENT

NEW DELHI Nov. 12

Sharp critiques of the Government of India's handling of the Sri Lanka problem and a call for a political solution to it were the features of the second day's debate on the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement in the Rajya Sabha today. The most effective intervention was made by Lt. Gen (rtd.) J. S. Aurora (Akali Dal-B) who said that a call for the complete and unconditional surrender by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) was wrong and would lead only to greater bitterness. Militarily it would be wrong to go in for a 'stop-go' type of operation and rather than a ceasefire, 'friends of the LTTE should undertake covert diplomacy to resolve the basis for a fresh modus operandi for disarmament.' The continuance of the current disarming operations by the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) ought to be no bar to these negotiations. The Government of India ought to encourage such a policy and carry it out.

In his opening remarks the General, who had masterminded the Indian Army's most succesful war to liberate Bangladesh, said the Indo-Sri Lanka accord was desirable and is still desirable but even the best of intentions could go astray unless these were put into practice systematically and with an eye to detail. Obliquely referring to Punjab, the General argued that the accord had been arrived at without sufficient preparation or an understanding of the possible consequences.

Blame Govt., not army: He characterised the Indian Army as a 'disciplined and gallant' force which functioned wholly professionally. It was the best integrated body in the country and the 'steel frame' for the integrity of the country. However, sometimes it was made to carry out tasks which were not properly studied and appreciated. In the Jaffna operation, such circumstances had led to it being caught 'flat-footed' initially and the operation lost momemtum and the IPKF took heavy casualties. He said civilian casualties were inevitable in an operation like this and such a situation caused enormous anguish to the soldiers concerned. It was wrong to say that the army was wilfully killing civilians. 'If you must blame anyone, blame the Government of India's bumbling policy,' he added.

He called on the Government to carefully examine the future options and realise that India's friends in Sri Lanka would always be the Tamils. So nothing should be done which would cause a divide and defeat the purpose of the accord. He agreed that the task would be difficult and the consequences heavy. 'We had failed to carry the militants with us initially and for this we have paid dearly. We have involved the Indian Army in a no-win situation thoughtlessly.'

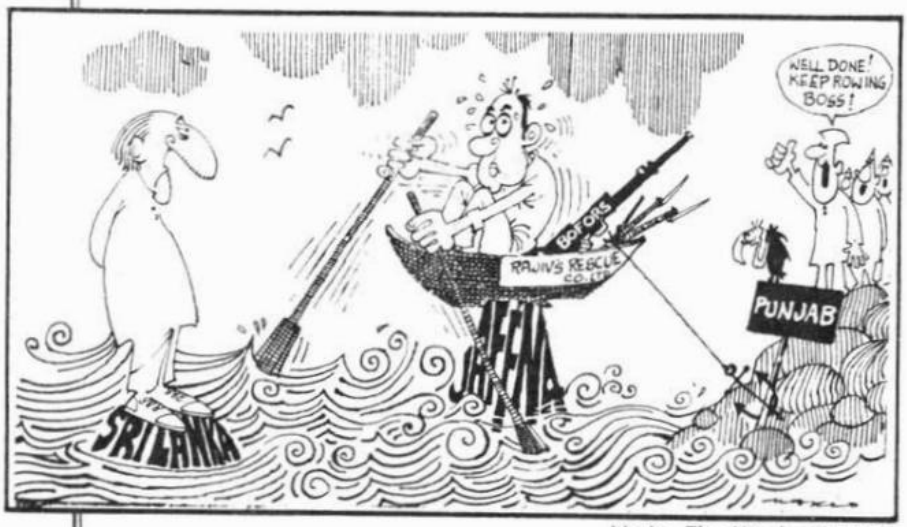
Policy in tatters, says Jaswant Singh: Another telling criticism was made by Mr. Jaswant Singh (BJP), a former army officer. He said the "bungling of the Indian Government's policy in Sri Lanka" had landed the country in a very serious, adverse security situation. The issue was not the LTTE but the Indian Government's Sri Lanka policy. 'We find it in tatters and we are unable to recognise its contours,' he said.

Mr. Jaswant Singh strongly criticised the Prime Minister's contention that only the Opposition and Pakistan opposed the Indo-Sri Lankan agreement and said Mr. Rajiv Gandhi had forgotten the Sri Lankan Prime Minister, the militant groups and even the TULF on this score. The Government had failed on all three counts of protecting the Tamil aspirations, restoring peace and amity in the island and protecting India's security concerns. The Indian army had been involved in a situation where it had to resolve the Government's gross political errors.

Disquieting aftermath: Another nuance of the critique was heard from Mr. Valumpuri John (AIADMK) who said that the right and wrongs were not currently the issue but a ceasefire. He said his party was for the Indo-Sri Lanka agreement and still stood by it but the aftermath had raised some disquieting issues. For example, while disarming the LTTE was part of the agreement, the only guarantees the militants got for their security were verbal. He wondered how even such guarantees could work in circumstances where the Prime Minister of India had been attacked in Colombo after signing the agreement. The Sri Lankan Government, he argued, had no intention of putting the agreement into practice. The situation had 'created a great strain in our sense of belonging to India.'

The AIADMK member said that while his party fully supported the steps under the agreement, they did not like to be placed in the 'precarious' position with regard to their sense of belonging to the country.

Stop bloodshed: Mr. Chaturanan Misra (CPI), speaking, in home-spun Hindi, said that the Government of India had been caught in a quagmire in Sri Lanka. However now that the LTTE had been shattered, this was the time to talk to it. Since the main issues with regard to India's security concerns too had been realised, he called on the Government not to make the operations against the LTTE a prestige issue and take steps to halt immediately the bloodshed.



Mario, The Week, 22.11.87.

'More dangerous than Punjab'

PTI, UNI report :

Mr. Jaswant Singh said Tamil Nadu had been plunged into "political turmoil" because of the happenings in the island across the Palk Strait. Sri Lanka had become a "graveyard" of Tamil aspirations and Tamil citizens.

Although he did not agree with certain observations of Mr. Gopalasamy (DMK) yesterday, Mr. Jaswant Singh said the DMK member's warning that "seeds of disintegration" had been sown should not be taken lightly.

After Punjab, Tamil Nadu had become the second State to "revile" against the Indian army. This is a very dangerous situation, he warned.

Mr. Jaswant Singh underlined the need for a closer scrutiny of India's foreign policy vis-a-vis Sri Lanka in the light of what he called the failure of the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement. "An effectiveness of a polity is to what extent the policy has been able to achieve on the ground," he said.

The BJP member said the worsening situation in the island nation would force the superpowers to make their presence felt in the region and pose a threat to India.

Mr. Ramamurthy (Cong.-I) said that India was con-

cerned with the well-being of all the Tamils in Sri Lanka and not just of any particular group.

Resuming his speech on the short duration discussion on the situation in Sri Lanka raised by Mr. V. Gopalasamy in the House yesterday, Mr. Narayanaswamy (Cong.-I) said the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) was not only fighting the other groups of Tamils in the island but was confronting the Indian Peace Keeping Force. It had gone back on the Indo-Sri Lanka agreement.

Mr. Valampuri John said disarming the LTTE would take away its only bargaining power. The Tamils had struggled for 30 years and the gun was their last resort. It not only weakened the LTTE, but also strengthened Mr. Jayewardene's hands.

Mr. Thangabalu (Cong.-I) described the peace agreement as unprecedented. The present problems arose because the LTTE was not interested in democratic rule. The agreement was signed only after the LTTE and its leader, Mr. Prabakaran had agreed to it.

Ask for interim council: Mr. Thangabalu said the LTTE was now fighting the IPKF in a "shameful manner". It earlier ruled Jaffna forcibly before the city was liberated by the IPKF. He urged the Indian Government to influence the Sri Lankan Government to immediately announce the interim council for the Northern and Eastern provinces.

"India in a mess": Mr. M. S. Gurupadaswamy (Janata) said the Indo-Sri Lankan accord was dead and had landed India" virtually in a mess." He wondered whether the agreement was timely and that it should have been tripartite involving the Tamils in Sri Lanka.

The concurrence of the Tamils in Sri Lanka, especially the LTTE, was essential. It was not clear whether all Tamil groups had been consulted by the Indian Government before signing the accord.

The Janata leader said the basic mistake of the Indo-Sri Lanka agreement was that it was signed in a hurry and as a result, India was interfering militarily in Sri Lanka. "We are playing a diabolically reverse role," and the IPKF was now doing what the Sri Lankan army was doing earlier.

Call for realistic approach: He said the Indian Government should adopt a realistic approach and shed the dangerous illusion that the Sri Lankan issue could be resolved militarily for this would mean "peace only over dead bodies of Tamils."

'Petty regionalism': Mr. Anand Sharma and Mr. Kapil Verma of the Cong. (I) charged the Opposition with not viewing the IPKF operation in Jaffna with the national perception but with "petty regionalism". Mr. Sharma said it was wrong to term the operations as battle, saying it was just the disarming process.

Mr. J. P. Goyal of the Lok Dal wondered how the IPKF had changed its role to one of offensive against the very people it had gone to protect. The accord was not valid as the LTTE and some other militants were not a party to it.

Mr. S. P. Malaviya (Lok Dal) said India should have remained an arbitrator, without becoming a party, by signing the accord to solve the ethnic issue. The main purpose of sending the IPKF to Sri Lanka — to maintain peace — was not being achieved but getting more and more complicated.

Mr. Chitta Basu (FB) criticised the shifting stands of Mr. Jayewardene.

Minister's reply today: The debate concluded today, but Mr. Natwar Singh, Minister of State for External Affairs will give his reply tomorrow. — UNI PTI

LTTE to blame: Minister

The Minister of State for External Affairs, Mr. Natwar Singh, today blamed the LTTE's shifting attitude for landing India in the present situation in Sri Lanka.

"I am profoundly and deeply sorry that the attitude of LTTE and its leadership had altered so drastically in the last few weeks that we have landed in this situation", Mr. Singh said in a brief intervention in the Rajya Sabha discussion.

CIVILIANS □ KILLED (Operation Pawan)

Rasammah 6.11.87

Mrs.Ratnam 7.11.87

Santhi 7.11.87

N. Iyem Pillai 8.11.87

G. Subbiah 8.11.87

S. Thambi Iyan 8.11.87

K.T. Sambandar 8.11.87

A. Ratnam 9.11.87

Sivalooanathan 10.11.87

S. Subramaniam 10.11.87

A. Padhmanathan 11.11.87

Mrs. Parameswari 11.11.87

I. Yogeswaran 11.11.87

D. Gurusami 12.11.87

V. Malini 12.11.87

N. Paramanathan 12.11.87

P. Raiah 12.11.87

R. Selvarani 12.11.87

THE STATESMAN

COMMENT

MISADVENTURE IN LANKA

But India Cannot Back Out Now

COMPARING New Delhi's propensity to sign accords with Muhammed-bin-Tughlaq's misdeeds, Wing Commander Amar Zutshi says that Parliament should "institute some Constitutional safeguards to prevent such misadventures in future". He also wonders how sincere the Sri Lankan Government is about implementing the accord, given the reports of Sinhalese being settled in the eastern parts of the island and the disinclination to hold elections or set up provincial councils in the Tamil areas till normal conditions have been restored. Also suspicious of U.S. intentions, Wing Commander Zutshi believes that having been involved in the war, India will have to complete its task no matter how high the cost.

AMAR ZUTSHI

12.11.87

TWO months before the Sri Lankan accord was signed on July 29 the Washington-based Heritage Foundation had presented a special paper on the Sri Lankan problem to the U.S. State Department suggesting joint Indo-Sri Lankan naval patrolling of the Palk Straits to check militant traffic, as well as Indian mediation to settle the island's ethnic strife On the face of it, this sounded too good to be true from the Indian point of view. But analysts familiar with nosy U.S. manoeuvres sensed a catch somewhere.

The developments ever since the accord became a reality seem to indicate that the U.S. policy makers perhaps saw India's Vietnam in the making in the Sri Lankan situation. How else is one to sum up the U.S. applause of the accord which actually threatens the future of the vital U.S naval facilities at Trincomalee and that of the nearby Voice of America complex, Colombo having virtually surrendered its sovereignty over the latter to the USA in terms of the lease agreement?

How did New Delhi enter into an agreement with Colombo over a dispute the latter had with its own nationals? The die having been thus cast by the flawed terms of the accord the blaze was ignited by the perhaps calculated insistence of the hardliner, Mr Lalith Athulathmudali, who demanded his pound of flesh in the transfer of the 17 doomed LTTE prisoners from IPKF custody to the Government in Colombo. Thereafter, New Delhi was sucked into a situation not of its own choosing. It was not for nothing that another hardliner the Sri Lankan Prime Minister, Mr Ranasinghe Premadasa, gloated in Los Angeles on how the accord had "turned the protectors into hunters".

DISCORD

New Delhi's proclivity for designing such disingenuous accords has aggravated the country's problems. These will go down in history as accords for discord, reminiscent of the misdeeds of the legendary Tughlaq. The rout of the LTTE in Jaffna does not mean its annihilation. The battle may have been won but winning the war can be elusive. What the Sri Lanka Government could not do for four years, the Indian Government undertook to achieve in a tight schedule of weeks and that too without the consent of the Tamils. Despite New Delhi's reassuring claims, the situation in Sri Lanka has acquired dangerous dimensions that can spell disaster for India both in the military and diplomatic fields.

For the first time, Indian troops have been placed under the control of a foreign Government on foreign soil. At the time of writing more than two divisions of troops backed by tanks, APCs, field guns and commandos are waging a war. Besides other small boats, there are at least two Leander class Indian frigates in the Palk Straits. The IAF's transport fleet is running countless shuttles to and within the island State in support of the ground forces. Official claims notwithstanding, no less than 300 Indian officers and jawans have been killed and many more injured. The financial burden is equally high.

The military has again been misused to salvage national interests and retrieve the Government's credibility which has been damaged by inept political handling. Whether in Amritsar or Jaffna, why use Indian troops to shed Indian or ethnic Indian blood? Why unnecessarily subject the fair image of the Indian jawan to criticism by a section of its own countrymen? Waging a war in built-up areas, townships and streets is an excruciating operation, most dreaded and hated by an infantryman.

Close Quarter Battle (CQB) in such areas is brutalizing as it involves the unavoidable loss of innocent civilian lives and property. Committing Indian troops to an undeclared war on foreign soil in so cavalier a fashion is too serious an issue to be decided by a besieged Government looking for success. Parliament should institute some Constitutional safeguards to prevent such misadventures in future.

Of the various militants in Sri Lanka the LTTE is the most highly trained and battle-conditioned, besides being a strongly motivated and heavily armed guerrilla group. Public memory is short, but let us not forget how Sri Lankan Tamils have been oppressed, hounded and discriminated against by their own Government in yet another manifestation of apartheid Because the LTTE guerrillas staked their lives to defend the Tamil minority, they are emotionally identified as the saviours. No wonder the IPKF war has antagonized the island's Tamils whom it was meant to protect.

If the concept of guerrilla warfare is any guide the journey to Jaffna is going to be a long and perilous one. It does not behove the mighty Indian State to bring down to its knees a small militant group sparing not even aerial strikes to silence them Both New Delhi and Colombo should recognize that to make a success of the accord, they will ultimately have to make peace with the LTTE. The IPKF should never again commit the mistake of handing over any LTTE prisoners to Colombo which has announced a million rupees for the head of its supremo, Mr V. Pirabhakaran, and his close deputies.

India would do well to tell President Jayewardene that whatever be his domestic compulsions such pronouncements as withdrawal of amnesty to the militants or the dropping of the jinxed interim administrative councils or the postponement of the provincial council elections till the restoration of normalcy has further undermined his credibility in the eyes of the Tamil minority. There should be no attempt to renege on the terms of the accord if

you want to bring the dissidents back into the political process.

Equally alarming are the persistent reports that Colombo is busy settling Sinhalese in the east to tilt the balance against the merger of the Eastern and Northern provinces with the latter's Tamil majority. In this context, President Jayewardene's recent suggestion for signing a fresh treaty in terms of the annexure to the Indo-Sri Lankan accord sounds intriguing. The statement says that Sri Lanka has agreed to ensure that the Trincomalee port "will not be made available for military use by any country in a manner prejudicial to India's interest". As for the Voice of America, President Jayewardene says that it should be used "solely as public broadcasting facilities and not for any military intelligence". But the two activities cannot be isolated. Perhaps under domestic and foreign pressure, the intention is to dilute the solemn undertaking for putting an end to the foreign military use of Trincomalee port as well as of all foreign broadcasting facilities in the island. Quite rightly, the idea has not found favour with New Delhi. To safeguard their mutual interests the two countries should enter into a long-term treaty of peace and friendship.

ACCORD

There is no dearth of people in Sri Lanka who are opposed to the accord. Will the IPKF have to discipline them as well to save it? However, such elements should realize that the only way to bring peace and harmony to the island is to meet the rightful demands of the Tamil minority. Other detractors of the accord would do well to remember that by now Indian involvement in Sri Lanka is so deep and complete that nothing can deter India from implementing the accord, no matter how high the cost or what hurdles come in the way.

The Indian objective is limited to ensuring a prosperous, unified, peaceful, democratic and friendly Sri Lanka that recognizes India's primacy in the region and does not act in any manner affecting our security interests. An amateurish handling of the situation by our political leadership has landed us in a mess for which the nation is paying a heavy price. But national honour demands that we now resolutely stand by the commitments made by the Prime Minister, no matter how onerous the task. There is no getting away from it. The stakes are too high. Issues of regional stability are involved.

LETTER

14.11.87.

IPKF TOLL

Sir—In "Justifying IPKF Casualties (November 2-3), N. R. Batra has highlighted a matter of serious concern—the mounting Indian casualties in Sri Lanka. The cavalier manner in which troops are committed in dubious adventures by political leaders casts doubts on their capacity to understand the role and employment of the Army as well as their motivation.

Mr Rajiv Gandhi to refurbish his fading image, has involved the Army in a "No-win" situation in Sri Lanka The Army is now called upon to kill the same Tamils whom until yesterday, we were training and equipping. Whether it was an American ploy or Mr Jayewardene's manoeuvre is of little consequence; the fact is that from the military point of view, the number of army casualties is unacceptable.—Yours etc., J. S. BINDRA (Lt-Col, Retd).

New Delhi, November 7.

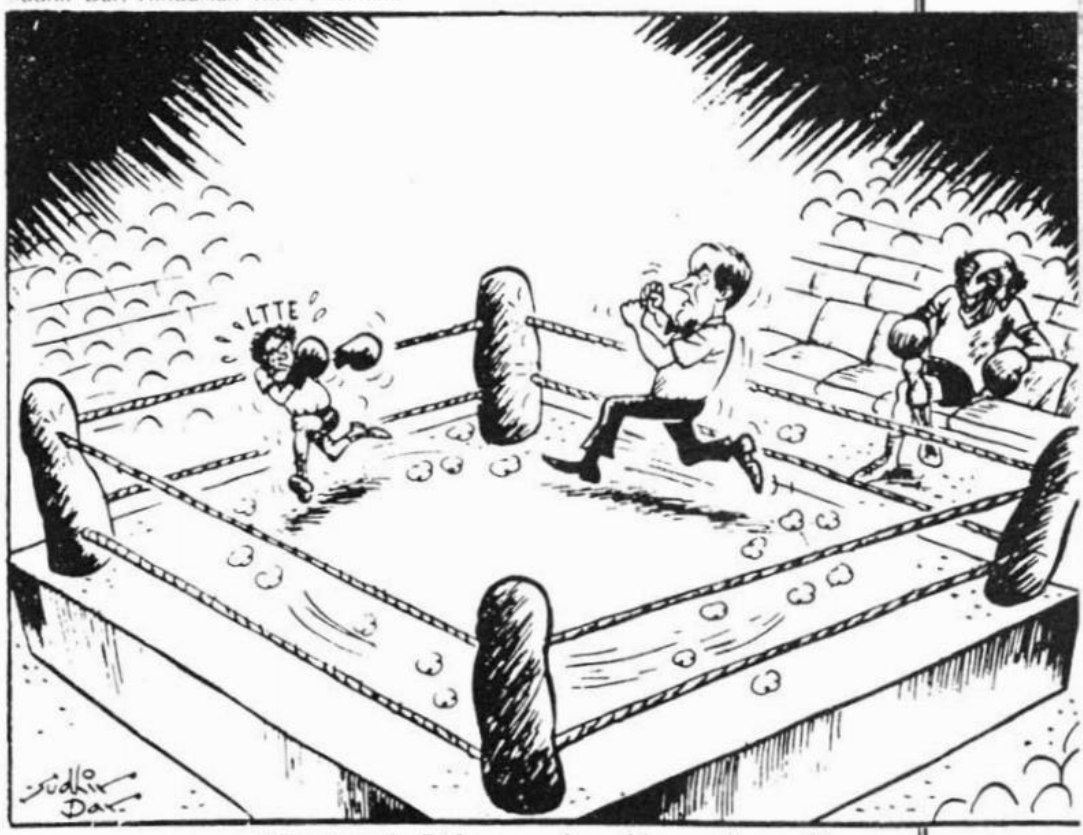
Sir,—It is evident that our brave officers and jawans were pushed into the Sri Lanka battlefield with their hands tied behind their backs No air cover was provided to our commandos when they were dropped by helicopter nor reinforcements sent immediately to the besieged soldiers. It is apparent that no thought was given to all these eventualities by commanders in the field hence the heavy casualties sustained by our officers and jawans.

Will the AG's branch of Army Headquarters conduct a Court of Enquiry and let the public know who is responsible for the loss of so many precious lives.

I who took part in World War II, the Kashmir operations after partition and the Hyderabad police action, have never seen such a heavy loss due to faulty tactics adopted by our Field Commanders. This must be probed.—Yours etc., K. KUMAR.

New Delhi, November 8.

Sudhir Dar, Hindustan Times, 8.11.87.



"Good work, Referee .... keep him on the run!"

AFFIDAVIT

I, PONNAMPALAM LOGENDRAN, Aged 22 years, of THENIYAMBAI, VALVETTITURAI, SRI LANKA being a Hindu do hereby solemnly, sincerely and truly declare and affirm as follows :-

(1) That I am the affirmant above-named holding national identity card No : 663391224-V.

(2) That the Indian Peace Keeping Force (I.P.K.F.) assumed control over our Valvettiturai area from 6th Nov. 1987 without any resistance whatsoever and continues to be in peaceful possession since then.

(3) That, on 16-11-1987 at about 12.30 p.m. I paid a visit to my friends (former collegemates) Messrs. VAITHEESWARAN JEGATHEESWARAN and NADARAJAH PREMANATHAN both of KAMBARMALAI, VALVETTITURAI.

(4) That, when I was with them at Kambarmalai, round about 1.00 p.m., the members of the I.P.K.F. came to Kambarmalai Junction and made an announcement over a loud-speaker to the effect that they were going to issue free rice, wheat flour and dry fish then and there. Owing to the fact, that, a continuous curfew was in force in the Jaffna Peninsula for ever one month there had been an acute shortage for all essential food items. Hence, in response to the announcement the local people of that area, who were virtually under starvation, rushed to the spot. Very soon there was a considerably large crowd of people. Then the I.P.K.F. started issuing a small quantity of rice and flour to the crowd.

(5) That, to our surprise, all of a sudden all the people there were rounded up by the I.P.K.F. Later they selectively arrested seven youths including the above-said friends and myself. Other detenues are by the names of :
PARMASAMY PARAMANATHAN, SIVASUBRAMANIAM SIVANATHAN, SRISKANTHA RAJAH VATHANARAJAH and MUNUSAMY BABURAJ. Soon after we were all brought to Valvettiturai.

(6) That, I was kept behind bars at a temporary camp functioning at the house named "EESWARI VASA", Valvettiturai along with V. JEGATHEESWARAN and N, PREMANATHAN. We were not provided with any meals for 2 days. Exceptionally on one occation one member of the I.P.K.F. personnel guarding us had shown magnanimity towards us by giving us some morsel of food around midnight and warned us not to ask the incident of the supply of meal as he was under strict orders not to provide any meal to us. But we underwent intermittent tortures of various forms. We were manhandled with hands, legs, clubs and especially with wooden slaps.

(7) That, on 18-11-1987 we were taken to the house of Dr. BALAKRISHNAN the Ex. District Medical Officer, Valvettiturai which was one of the several houses forcibly occupied by the I.P.K.F. and was functioning as the main camp cum residence of the area Commander at that time and kept just in front of "Kalanithy stores" with our hands tied together.

(8) That, a short while later, M. BABURAJAH and S.SIVANANTHAN were brought to the same spot from Valvettiturai Junction. Later S. VATHANARAJAH was brought by some other soldiers from the opposite direction. We were ordered to get into "ELF" Mini van which was parked there. Then the corpse of P. PARAMANATHAN was brought by some military personnel along the road by which S. VATHANARAJAH was brought and loaded in the same van.

(9) That, we had been brought to Vallai Velli (a vast open space which is the border of Vadamarachy and the rest of the Jaffna Peninsula) in the same vehicle. As the van was proceeding more number of members of the I.P.K.F. joined us on foot on route. At the terminal end over a hundred-I.P.K.F. Officials had assembled.

(10) That, the mini van in which we were taken was parked by the side of the main road. Later some of the soldiers dug a grave and took the corpse of Paramananthan and buried the same there. As the scene of incident was within a short distance from the said van, we were able to have a clear view of what was taking place.

(11) That, thereafter all the remaining six including myself were taken to the adjacent sector. Our hands were untied and instead we were asked to keep our legs apart at a distance of about two feet and tied up with the same rope so that we could respond to their further order of digging in six more graves. The Officer who was in command at that spot appeared to be a Hindi speaking gentleman.

(12) That, then Munusamy Baburaj (one of the remaining six) was ordered to lie down in one of the graves with the hands and legs straight and face upwards. Then the commander ordered a particular officer to shoot him. While he made attempts to do

so, we all got panicked and started raising a hue and cries. We begged of them not to kill that innocent youngster. Furthermore Premanathan intimated them the fact, that, Baburaj was an Indian by birth. But all our requests fell on deaf ears. Baburaj was shot at thrice and killed whilst in the grave.

13) That, thereafter we were all ordered to stand near each one of the graves dug by us. Then we were interrogated by the I.P.K.F. personnel at gun points with the assistance of one Tamil soldier by the name Ramachandran who conducted the translation. Pressure and even physical torture were exerted on us to make us admit that we had contacts with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. (L.T.T.E.). Furthermore we were forced to reveal informations with regard to the whereabouts of Tigers, their arms and ammunitions. As repeated attempts were made to shoot us, we started screaming fearing imminent death.

(14) That, then the officer in command informed us that he was kind enough to extend our life span for twentyfour hours and that if we failed to come out with the relevant facts within our knowledge before the ultimatum we would be brought to the very same spot, killed and buried.

(15) That, then we are brought back to Valvettiturai again and kept together in confinement at an upstair building situated at Valvettiturai junction named "Mahendra Vilas". We learned the following facts from Mr. S. Vathanarajah :-

(A) He was previously detained at "Balasunthara Bhavanam" located at Theniyambai, Valvettiturai along with Mr. P. Paramanathan, the deceased.

(B) The torture meted out to them was very severe. They were even hung with the head down and mercilessly handled.

(C) The said Paramanathan succumbed to the injuries he sustained in front of his eyes.

(D) One young Tamil I.P.K.F. personnel named Anilkumar played a very vital role in torturing both of them. He went to the extent of burning the genital organ with a piece of detonator.

(16) That, all the remaining five had relatively lesser agony afterwards. I will be certainly failing in my duties if I fail to mention that one Mr. armed personnel from Tamil Nadu was gracious enough to sympathise with us and consoled us with soothy words whenever we were undergoing hardships.

(17) That we all were transferred to the Kankesanturai detention camp on 22-11-1987 where our parents were permitted to visit us.

(18) That, as a result of the various steps taken by my father I was enlarged on parole on 12-12-1987 together with N. Premanathan. V. Jegatheeswaran was released two days later. S. Sivananthan too was freed. But S. Vathanarajah is still languishing in the I.P.K.F. cell at Kankesanturai. We were asked to come and report at the I.P.K.F. main camp at Valvettiturai for a few days.

(19) That, we all were given an official letter by Major, M.S. SUNDU, of 4th unit, the Parachute Regiment who was in overall charge of Valvettiturai, Udupiddy and Thondamanaru areas then, where he had made mention about our apprehension and the subsequent release. The condition of reporting at the I.P.K.F. was dispensed with later.

(20) That, I am constrained to divulge that the impact of the torture and horror perpetrated on me and others in my presence still keeps me in an unbalanced mental disposition and psychological fear. In addition I still have physical pains. P. Logendran

Read over and admitted correct and signed by the deponent at VALVETTITURAI on this 28th day of February, 1988.

Before me,

S. Thanabalasingam
The Justice of the Peace.

PASS

Shri. P. LOGENDRAN, son of Shri. Ponnambalam, resident of village Theniambai., P.O., Valvettiturai was apprehended by this unit and released after interrogation.

He may not be apprehended again unless circumstances demand. This Unit may please be informed in case of his apprehension.

G.S. SUNDU
Maj.

AFFIDAVIT

I, KRISHNAPILLAI SRISKANTHARAJA, Age 50 years, Labourer, of BHARATHY VEETHY, KAMBARMALAI, VALVETTITURAI, SRI LANKA, being a Hindu do hereby solemnly, sincerely and truly declare and affirm as follows :-

(1) That, I am the declarant herein holding National Identity Card No :- 381170144-V

(2) That, I am employed as a labourer under a private building contractor.

(3) That, the details of the other members of my family are as follows :-

(A) Rajeswarai	- wife	42 years-house-wife
(B) Vasanthini	- daughter	22 years-unemployed
(C) Vathanarajan	- son	19 years-Student
(D) Vasini	- daughter	18 years Student
(E) Sivasini	- daughter	12 years Student

(4) That, the Indian Peace Keeping Force (I.P.K.F.) arrived here in SRI LANKA on or about the 29th day of July 1987. They brought our Valvettiturai area under their control as from 06.11.1987 without any resistance whatsoever and continue to be in undisturbed and uninterrupted control over us since then.

(5) That, on 16th Nov.1987 round about 1.p.m. some officials of the I.P.K.F. paid a visit at our hamlet-Kambarmalai and made an announcement over the loud-speaker to the effect that they were going to issue free rice, wheat flour, dryfish etc. then and there. Most of the people of our area being either peasants or labourers who are leading a hand to mouth life. As, at that time, the curfew was in force in our area for over one month without any break, there had been a virtual impoverishment and starvation. Furthermore there was an acute shortage for all essential commodities. Hence there was a good response to the announcement made. Soon after the announcement, there was a vast crowd of people at our junction. Then the I.P.K.F. started issuing a small quantity of rice and wheat flour.

6) That, to our surprise, all of a sudden, all the people there were rounded up by the I.P.K.F. Later they selectively arrested six youths by the names of V. Jegatheeswaran, N. Premanathan, S. Sivananthan, P. Paramanathan, N. Baburaj and P. Logendran.

7) Then, some of the I.P.K.F. personnel came to our house which is situated by the side of the junction and took our above-said son Vathanarajah into custody on mere suspicion while he was giving tuition to his younger sisters. My wife and daughters started screaming out of fear and excitement. My wife and self begged of them not to take him away by bringing the following facts to their attention:-

(a) he is the one and only son of mine.

(b) he is a keen and brilliant Advanced Level Student of Commerce at Neklliyadi M.M.V. Owing to the major military offensive launched by Sri Lanka armed forces in May, 1987 in the name of "OPERATION LIBERATION", he had to inevitably skip the A/L final examination held in 1987. He is now preparing for the same to be held in April, 1988.

(c) He is a law abiding citizen having no involvement in any violent or military activities whatsoever.

But all our pleadings fell on deaf ears. Our attempt to earn their sympathy by falling at their feet also proved to be fruitless. He was forcebly taken away.

(8) That, thereafter we took various steps to locate his whereabouts, but unsuccessfully. Only after a lapse of about one month we came to know from Messrs. V. Jegatheeswaran N. Premanathan, P. Logendran, and S. Sivananthan who were arrested along with him and released later on, that, my son was kept behind bars at the I.P.K.F. camp at Kankesanturai.

(9) That, after obtaining a pass from the Indian Civil Administrator attached to the Kachcheri, Jaffna, I proceeded to the said I.P.K.F camp at Kankesanturai. I was asked to come after 5 days. I was provided with the first opportunity of meeting my son on or around the 25th-Dec. 1987.

(10) That, upto now, we have been permitted to visit him about ten occasions. During my 1st visit I noticed partially healed wounds in his both wrists and ankles. I asked him asto how he sustained those injuries. He kept mum. He was seen to be subdued then. Subsequently I was told by him that these were all marks of torture. He further intimated that Mr. P. Paramanathan and himself were kept in confinement together at "Balasunthara Bhavanam", Valvettiturai and were mercilessly manhandled by the I.P.K.F. soon after their arrest. They were even hung with the head down and beaten. Mr. Paramanathan succumbed to the injuries he sustained in his immediate presence. Later on (on 18-11-1987) some of the I.P.K.F. personnel

took him and the other remaining five detenues to vallai open space along with the corpse of Paramanathan and buried the same there. Then they got them dig six graves, asked M. Baburaj to lie down in one of the graves and shot at and killed him in the presence of all other detenues. Thereafter they all were threatened to be killed.

(11) That, out of the seven youths apprehended at Kambarmalai on 16-11-87 two were silenced for ever by the I.P.K.F. Four others were freed. Hence only my son is still languishing behind bars. As he is now in receipt of the admission card to sit the A/L examinations in April, this year, I fear, that, his prolonged stay in the detention cell may jeoparadise the entirity of his future.

(12) That, I being the father of three young girls and one with a heavy financial responsibilities, am largely depending on my son, Vathanarajan and fervently hoping that he would share the brunt of my family burdens.

Read over the admitted correct
by the affirmant hereof
and signed by him in my
presence at Valvettiturai
on the 18th day of Feb., 1988.

Before me,

Before me,
JUSTICE OF THE PEACE

I, (MRS.) PECHCHIYAMMA MUNUSAMY, Age 52 years, of BHARATHY VEETHI, KAMBARMALAI, VALVETTITURAI, SRI LANKA, being a Hindu do hereby solemnly, sincerely and truly declare and affirm as follows :-

(1) That I am affirmant above-named.

(2) That, I am an Indian by birth but became a citizen of Sri Lanka by registration. I married one Mr. Munusamy who was a citizen of India upto the time of his demise in 1983. About 14 years back we shifted our family from Sea street, Colombo to Kambarmalai and got settled down here.

3) That, we have nine children, out of whom the eldest three were married and settled elsewhere. Following are the children in my custody at present :-

(A)	Indiraghandi	daughter	25 years unemployed
(B)	Baburaj	son	24 years employed
(C)	Maheswari	daughter	21 years unemployed
(D)	Yogeswari	daughter	19 years student
(E)	Rathithevi	daughter	17 years student
(F)	Antony Raj	son	15 years student

(4) That, the Indian Peace Keeping Force (I.P.K.F.) assumed control over our area as from 06-11-1987 without any resistance and continued to be in peaceful position since then.

(5) That, on the 16th Nov. 1987, at about 1 p.m., the I.P.K.F. visited our hamlet, Kambarmalai and made an announcement over the loud - speaker, that, they are going to issue free rice, wheat flour, dry fish etc. Majority of my villagers are either peasants or labourers who are leading a hand to mouth life. As the curfew was in force for over one month without any break, there had been a virtual impoverishment and starvation then. Relatively the plight of our family was still worse. Hence there was a good responce to the announcement made. Soon after there was a vast crowd of people at our junction. I too rushed to that spot with my son, the said Baburaj.

(6) That, all of a sudden, to our surprise, all the people there were rounded up by the I.P.K.F. They started arresting a few youths selectively. My son Baburaj was also taken into custody along with six others by the names of P. Paramanathan, S. Vathanarajah, S. Sivananthan, N. Premananthan, V. Jegatheeswaran and P. Logendran. I was shocked, grieved and raised hue and cries. As our house is situated in the close proximity to the scene of incident my daughters too came and joined me in begging the I.P.K.F. officials not to take him away. But our requests fell on deaf ears.

(7) That, upto now, I am not provided with any opportunity to see my son. I have made several fruitless attempts to locate his whereabouts. I have repeatedly visited various I.P.K.F. camps. I am really driven from pillar to post.

(8) That, out of the six youths apprehended by the I.P.K.F. on 16-11-87 along with my son, four were freed after the lapse of one month. They are Messrs. N. Premananthan, P. Jegatheeswaran, S. Sivananthan and P. Logendran. They all were quite good and close to my family. In spite of this fact, they seem to avoid me after being released. One of the youths arrested by the I.P.K.F. by the name of S. Vathanarajah is

kept behind bars at Kankesanthurai. His parents came to know about his whereabouts through the above-said gentlemen and are paying visits now and then. I voluntarily went to the house of the said youths and made inquiries. To my disappointment, I was told that they were utterly clueless about my son and his whereabouts. As I was able to notice some sort of excitements in them I am compelled to think that they all are hiding some facts to me for fear of consequences.

(9) That, I am constrained to make mention about another relevant fact. As I was frequently visiting various I.P.K.F. camps in the Jaffna Peninsula in search of my son. I have come in to contact with certain armed personnel. On one occasion, an I.P.K.F. personnel attached to Manthikai camp, who is persumably a gurka, asked me with the assistance of another soldier who managed to speak broken tamil, as to why I was visiting that camp every now and then. I told everything to him in detail. He further asked me asto whether I am really an Indian. I said "Yes". He was seemed to be very much moved. He affectionately tapped on my head and told me "no point in coming here in search of your son. He won't come back. You better go and pray to God". I observe even tears in his eyes.

(10) That, anyhow major Multani of the Civil Service cell at Manthikai, Point Pedro, the civil administrative officer attached to the Kachcheri, Jaffna and other high ranged officers are still giving hopes to me, but without making any revelation about his whereabouts.

(11) That, my said son - Baburaj was the sole bread-winner of our family. Upto the time of his arrest we were exclusively depending on him for our subsistance. As he is not with us now, we are undergoing untold psychological, physical and financial strains. My youngest son, Antony Raj is a bright and studious student who usually comes first in his class. Due to the force of circumstances, I may be reluctantly compelled to put an end to his further studies. [illegible]

The contents of the forgoing affidavit
having been duely read over and explained
by me to the affirmant above-named
who appears to understand the same
and affixed her signature at Valvettiturai
on this 28th day of Feb., 1988.

I, Miss. Vasanthaleela Sivaguru (age-30 years) of "Kottu Valavu", Valvetty, Valvettiturai, being a Hindu, do hereby declare and affirm as follows :

(1) That, I am the affirmant above-named.

(2) That, I am the member of the teachers' Staff of American Mission College, Udupiddy.

(3) That, I was residing at the above-mentioned address with my late mother, Mrs. Thangamma Sivaguru (age-67 years) and my elder sister Mrs. Varathaleela Selvendran both of whom are widows.

(4) That, the Indian Peace Keeping Force (I.P.K.F) assumed control over Valvettiturai area on 06.11.1987.

(5) That, the members of the I.P.K.F. started shelling on 16.11.1987 at about 8.15 p.m. without any apparent provocation whatsoever. They would have fired about 8 shells. Round about 8.30 p.m. our house was struck by two shells fired from the direction of Valvettiturai Junction in succession at a brief interval of five to eight minutes.

(6) That, as a consequence, my mother, the said Mrs. S. Thangamma sustained grievous injuries on her left chest and left arm caused by the sharpnels of the shell. As continous curfew was in force in our area for over one month my mother could not be taken to hospital or surgical treatments. As a result , she succumbed to the injuries on the following morning (i.e on 17.11.1987) at 4.45 a.m.

(7) That, owing to the dreadful situation prevailing in this part of Sri Lanka and owing to continuous curfew, Courts & Police Department were not functioning then. In addition, there is no District Medical Officer (D.M.O) in our Peripheral Hospital, Valvettiturai since 06.11.1987. Hence our endeavours to have magisterial inquest and post-mortem have been proved futile and we had a brief funeral on 17.11.1987 itself after lodging official complaints to the nearby A.G.A and to our Village Headman (G.S.).

(8) That, myself too received injuries by the splinters of the shell in the course of the explosions. As at present our hospital is functioning only for few hours in the day time, I was not hospitalised. I underwent treatment upto 21.11.1987 both at Valvettiturai Government Hospital and Point Pedro Base Hospital.

(9) That, my nephew Mas. Selvendran Pradeeban (age-4 years) also became a

target of the said same shelling. He sustained injuries on to his head and back. He accompanied me to both hospitals for treatments. His treatments are still in progress.

(10) That, our house, windows, kitchen, furniture, cloths and plantations got largely damaged by the said two shells.

Read over and admitted correct by the affirmant here of and signed at Valvetty on this 30th day of November, 1987.

I, Mrs. Pathmavathie Thurairajah of Theni, Valvettiturai, being a Hindu, do hereby solemnly, sincerely and truely declare and affirm as follows :

(1) That, I am the deponent above-named.

(2) That my late husband Mr. Thambirajah Thurairajah (age 56 years) was a landed proprietor cum cultivator. After 1983 communal disturbances, we have come to our home town, Valvettiturai, deserting our estate in Trincomalee District.

(3) That, the Indian Peace keeping Force (I.P.K.F.) assumed control over Valvettiturai area on 06.11.1987 and continued to be in possession without any resistance since then.

(4) That, on the 8th day of November, 1987, at 9.00 a.m. my husband left for the market to buy vegetables, as this permanent market building comes within the area declared by the I.P.K.F. as their Security Zone. The Valvettiturai market was not functioning, hence we have to go hither and thither in search of provisions and vegetables.

(5) That, at about 10.00 a.m. someone came and informed us that my husband was lying down at the Vembadi Junction after being shot at by the Members of the I.P.K.F. men who came marching in the opposite direction.

(6) That, I rushed to the scene of the incident with my relations and expied his body lying on the Southern edge of the road near Vembady Junction in a pool of blood. As I.P.K.F men were pointing their guns at us from their nearby sentry at American Mission School we brought his body home in a hand cart without any delay. As curfew was in force then, we could not make arrangements for either Magisterial Inquest or a post-mortem. His death was confirmed by a final year Medical Student who attended the funeral. The injuries sustained by my late husband were shown to me by Mr. S. Pasupathy a retired Supreme Court Registrar. The entry would was in his right chest, corresponding exit one was found by the side of his right back plate.

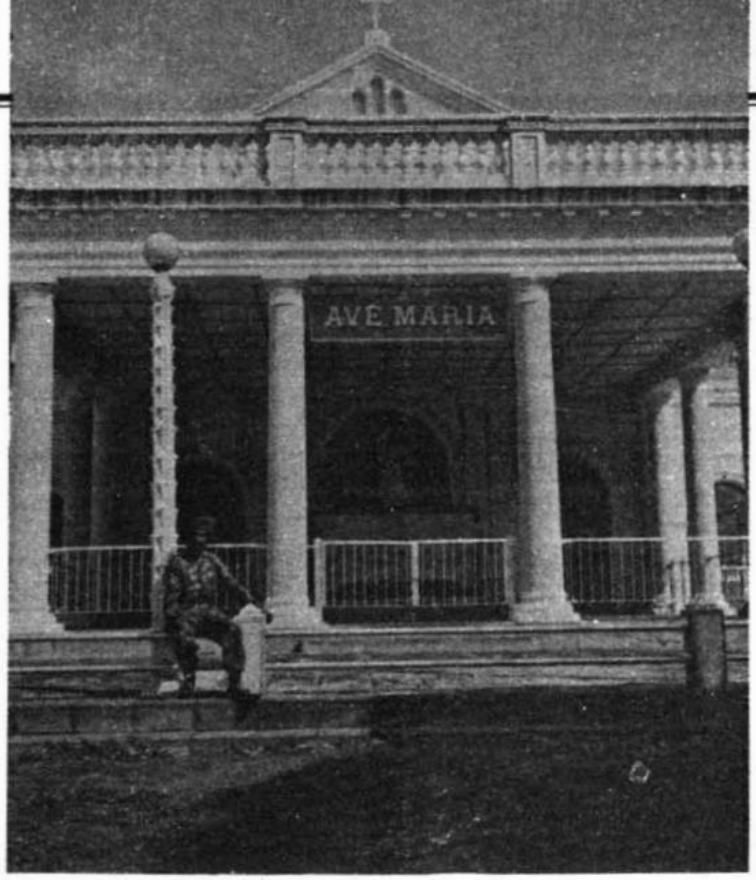
(7) That, taking the dreadful situation into consideration we had a hurried funeral at 1.00 p.m. on the same day itself.

(8) That, the detail of other members of our family are as follows :

1. T. Mukuntharajan	- son	- 25 years
2. T. Muraleetharan	- son	- 22 years
3. T. Varni	- daughter	- 19 years
4. T. Sharmini	- daughter	- 16 years

Owing to the untimely demise of my husband I have severe physical, psychological and financial strains and undergo untold hardships.

Read over and admitted correct by the affirmant who duly signed at Valvettiturai this 30th day of November, 1987



LETTER

Christian Community,
St. Joseph's Church,
Thannamunai
Batticaloa.
SRI LANKA.
17-11-1987

His Excellency Cardinal George
Basil Hume Oss
Arch Bishop's House
West Minister
LONDON SWIP IQJ

Your Excellency Rev. Minister,

An Appeal to take any steps to mediate for peace and settlement

On behalf of the entire Christian community and men of good-will, we appeal to the Christian organisations around the world to condemn all kinds of violence from any quarter it comes; especially the violence that prevails in our country (Sri Lanka). The Christian organisations have been always preaching peace and harmony, and consistently maintaining friendly relationship with all cross-sections of people.

The incident that caused the death of twenty or more soldiers from IPKF is very much regretted, and we express our sympathy to their kith and kin and to the mourners. At the same time, the behaviour of the IPKF men, that ensued this incident is abominable and not justified by any measure of justice, and needs to be condemned in the same if not with greater force of detestation.

We who are workers of the Roman Catholic and Methodist churches, received complaints from the victims who have been affected by the behaviour of the IPKF men after the incident on the 15th of October. The IPKF was acting in a manner that was unprecedented against the innocent civilians and against the holy place and its minister. As this group had totally or partially undergone this sad experience, we try to be as factual as possible. We have also gone to the refugee camps to gather the details and the extent of the havoc wrought by the IPKF.

Within an hour of the land-mine explosion, good many wagons of soldiers were near the site of the explosion. Then in groups, the IPKF went in different directions covering three adjoining villages viz; Thannamunai, Sathurukondan and Thannamunai colony as well as Sathurukondan colony taking pick-axe, mammoties, thick-poles, knives...etc along with their usual weapons. As they went they were out of control, and began their looting, setting the houses ablaze, molesting the women, raping as well as beating the people indiscriminately. They went house to house and thrilled to inflict all kinds of inhuman activities.

First as they went to the houses, they chased the inmates of the houses and began looting by forcefully opening the almyrahs, cabinets and travel bags. The complaints show that they were stealing golden ornaments, cash, wrist-watches, calculators, bed alarm clocks .....etc.,

Secondly, they poured petrol or oil and set the houses ablaze, dig houses, cottages and cattle-sheds, or damaged furniture and set the clothes, in a pile and burnt them.

The mission house which was the parish for all the other churches in the north of Batticaloa with all its 150 years of records, parish money and boarding funds and house and personal goods and clothes of the parish priest were set on fire or looted, especially the cash donations received in foreign currency were either looted or burnt.
Thirdly, house-hold utensils and electrical goods like T. V., radio, cookers...etc were purposely damaged or broken.

Fourthly, the vehicles tractors, cars, motorcycles, bicycles were burnt.

Fifthly, the entire village was indiscriminately and mercilessly beaten and some were cut. Even a few months old babies and pregnant women, sick men and women were beaten in the same way.

One man was beaten to death and two others were assaulted and burnt alive. Innocent women and girls were molested and raped. Women who were consecrated were molested and beaten.

Such nefarious and inhuman activities were continued for three consecutive days, even when His Lordship has appealed to the commander-in-charge to keep the area where the consecrated women (Reverend Sisters) have a farm for training young girls.

It is to be observed that the IPKF from India is acting in a fashion that doesn't become its purpose. We appeal to men of all ranks of good-will to extend a friendly hand to our nation and help us out from the mire of troubles we have gone through.

Thanking You.

Yours in Christ.

.....

(Signed: A. Arulanandhan.)
For Christian Community.

PARISH PRIEST
ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC CHURCH,
THANNAMUNAI.
Sri Lanka.

(Signed)
PARISH PRIEST
St. NICHOLA CHURCH
CHENKALADY
Sri Lanka

COMMENT

INDIA-SRI LANKA ACCORD

Unfolding Implications

AFTER nearly four long weeks of what has been termed as one of the bloodiest battles in the history of the Indian army, the IPKF is nowhere in sight of the end of the operation to 'ensure the cessation of hostilities' and the 'surrender of arms' by the militants in Jaffna. There is however, no doubt that the massive military manoeuvre is well on its way to wrecking the LTTE military network and organisation. On the other hand, even if the LTTE accounts of the IPKF atrocities are to be discounted, it would be hard to believe that the Indian army could have achieved much success against a group well-entrenched among the local population without large-scale operations involving civilians. It is not surprising that the peace keeping forces are widely reported to have also succeeded in turning the tide of Tamil opinion, which at one time may have viewed the Accord as a possible, even though limited, solution.

However, it is not so much the situation in Jaffna as that in the south which makes India's role in Sri Lanka more complex. According to some reports in the international press, LTTE's continued resistance is part of a plan to keep the security forces occupied in the north, while the Janata Vimukti Peramuna lets loose a spate of violence in the south. Whatever be the truth of all this, it may well be that India will be called upon to enlarge its specified role in Sri Lanka. Significantly, Jayewardene when asked about the possible deployment of Indian troops in the south, merely said "it is not specified in the Accord". The absence of a categorical statement as regards the extent and limit of the movement of Indian troops can only mean that the issue is still very much open.

Natwar Singh's statement in parliament is also rather curious. He has said that declaring a unilateral ceasefire would not be possible because it would damage the morale of the IPKF. Clearly the morale of an army can hardly be the only consideration in deciding to put an end to a war—not unless a crucial and long-term role is being envisaged for it.

In the circumstances the question of setting up a provincial government in the north and discussions on the devolution procedures are but of academic interest. Except of course insofar as the current exchange in the Sri Lankan parliament over the two bills on the issue gives some indication of the opposition to the Accord within and outside the government. As we go to press comes the news that the Sri Lanka minister for agriculture has resigned over differences with the government over the bills. He is the second MP and the first minister to have taken this step. Moreover, the Sri Lanka Freedom Party's opposition to the proposed constitutional amendement which would make possible the devolution of authority is of considerable significance in the context of the growing instability in the country. Even if the SLFP is not by itself capable at this point of toppling the government, it is quite possible that the people's protests that it has been organising will provide a cover, as has been alleged, for JVP's more militant anti-government activities. There have also been several reports of student protests against the Accord and the two bills. In other words, the threat to Jayewardene's government is very real.

It would appear that inevitably India has become committed to propping up Jayewardene. It is in this context that the recent announcement about the proposed Indo-Sri Lanka friendship and defence treaty must be viewed. Jayewardene has indicated his keenness for signing such a treaty and apparently a draft is under preperation. According to the president the treaty would be similar to the one that India has signed with the USSR and Bangladesh. India is reported to be cautious in its response and would prefer to wait until after the current situation in the country has been resolved. Interestingly, Jayewardene has emphasised that "the treaty will have nothing to do with what is happening in Jaffna". At the same time he has also said that the treaty would embody the letter and annexures of the Accord. Thus, it would appear that both the leaders have been well aware of the real nature and implications of the Accord, whatever be its public garb.

(Operation Pawan)

CIVILIANS □ KILLED

KANKESAN TURAI	
S. Thuraisamy	Anton Balamohan
S. Pushparajah	V. Kandiah
T. Babysingam	S. Maheswaran
Veerasingam	K. Sithamparanathan
Soman Chelvanayam	S. Ramachandran
KARAVEDDI	Karuththan Valli
K. Thillairajan	Victor Joseph
V. Tharmalingam	Nallathamby Rasiah
V. Rajagopal	*MYLIDDY*
K. Tharmabalan	T. Parameswarn
S. Rajakulendran	M. Kanagaranee
T. Sivakumaran	Sritharan
K. Thavaparan	Ravigandiah
K. Thaneswaran	Kovinthar
K. Vijayatharan	P.K. Sannathirathan
K. Kanthappu	N. Vijayakumaran
M. Subramaniam	M. Chandra Sekar
KODIKAMAM	Kanthan Sinnarasa
Yogarajah	P. Wigneswaran
Annammah	S. Arumainayagam
K. Murugan	P. Mahalingam
Sarojah	E. Pasupathy
Vallipillai	R. Parameswaran
Kandan Balan	M.E. Sylvester
Nathan	M. Panchardcharalingam
Pulendran	S. Jeyakumar
Vairavan Gurunathan	M. Anantharajah
MIRUSUVIL	V. Sivapalan
Rajendram Iyathurai	V. Ponnammah
Gugathasan	K. Sayanthar
Yogarajah	Vishnumohan
Ponnammah	A.E. Gnanachandran
Sinnathamby	K. Joseph Peter
Yogeswaran	Mylurasa

SRI LANKA IN THE

TIGERS' DEN

■ **Indian soldiers killed in Kokuvil encounter (left)**

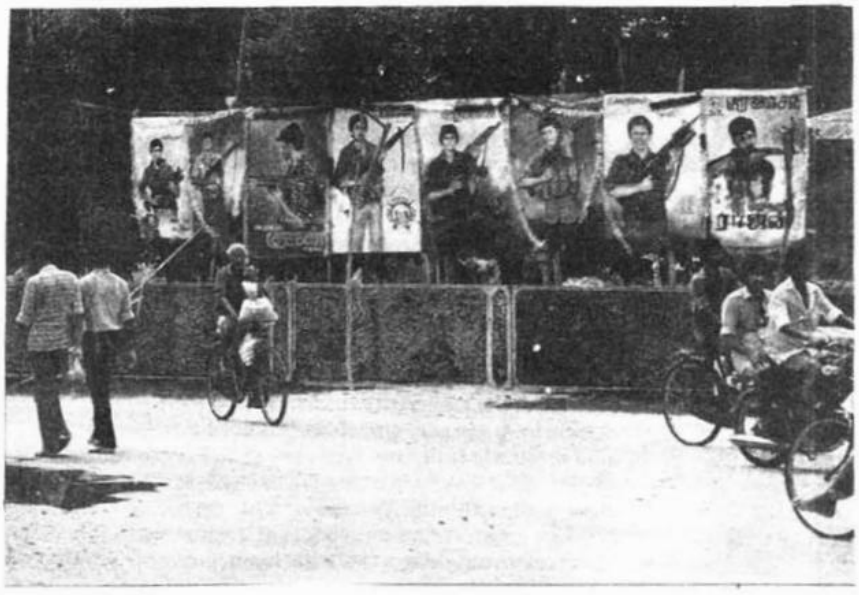
■ **Portrait of a Tiger guerrilla (top)**

■ **Posters of LTTE martyrs in Chavakacheri**

INDIA TODAY'S SHYAM TEKWANI *was the only photographer present in the combat zone at the height of the battle for Jaffna. Having been taken into Jaffna, skirting the advancing* IPKF *columns, by the* LTTE, *Tekwani was witness to actual battle scenes and obtained a unique insight into the Tigers, their morale, weaponry and tactics. His photographs reproduced on these pages are the only authentic pictures from the battlefield. Below is his eyewitness account of the five days he spent in the Tiger's den.*

IN their shorts or lungis, with beardless faces and bare feet, they look anything but battle-hardened guerrillas who have taken on the might of the fourth largest army in the world. Many are barely in their teens, some are young women, none looks a day older than 30. Yet, the lethal weaponry they wield with such proficiency, the revolutionary zeal in their eyes, their intimate knowledge of the local terrain and their absolute disdain for death describe how they have managed to give the 20,000-strong IPKF such a run for its money.

Spending five days with the Tigers at the height of the battle, I saw sights that, despite the occasional brutality and callousness for human life the Tigers display, evoke reluctant respect. I saw one LTTE guerrilla shot in the stomach, calmly swallow a cyanide capsule rather than hold up his companions in the battlefield. I saw a stunningly beautiful young woman standing

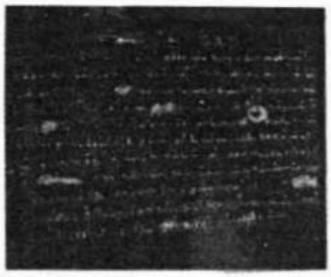


proudly in the middle of the road with an AK-47 in one hand and a comb in the other. Their confidence and exuberance in the face of near-certain annihilation by a superior force are remarkable.

In the middle of an all-out war, it appeared unreal to hear them laughing and jabbering away like the kids they were. Ansar, 18, who drove me to the hide-out where 18 Indian soldiers were being held captive, was apologetic about blindfolding me. As if to compensate, he entertained me with songs while he drove through the downpour for two hours. Nishantan's greeting accompanied with a huge smile was typical: "At last we are fighting for real," he said, as if their three-year battle with the Sri Lankan security forces had been just a warming up session.

At Kokuvil, where 13 Indian soldiers were killed, Babu, 18, and Keethan, 17, were arguing about who would go and finish off the remaining two soldiers. I arrived barely minutes after the action, in time to witness a sight I hope never to see again—Tiger guerrillas, barefoot and in short pants, cutting down the two remaining Indian soldiers in a hail of gunfire. There was one very energetic and enthusiastic lad, totally unarmed, who scurried like a rat across the street every time an Indian soldier fell, to retrieve weapons and ammunition with no care for the bullets whizzing around. The overall mood was one of excitement and a sudden zest for the blood sport they have started to enjoy the most—killing.

■ **Daily reports put up at street corners by LTTE**



■ **Indian soldiers taken prisoner and (top) helmet and identity card of dead soldier displayed by cyanide-carrying guerrilla**

At times, the scene was surreal, like a group of boys playing cops and robbers, the only difference being the bullets were for real. Occasionally, the blood lust came through, when they pulled out chocolates from the shirt pocket of a bloody corpse and passed them around while idly kicking at the remains of a human brain.

Not once did they give any sign that they were facing one of the most powerful armies in the world. In fact, it was just the opposite. "Any one of our Tiger cubs can take on the IPKF in man-to-man combat and defeat them," said one. Their confidence, after two weeks of fighting, comes from their conviction that the IPKF is untrained in the kind of urban guerrilla warfare that, for many Tigers, has been their whole life. The trademark cyanide phials are no longer worn inside their shirts but flaunted openly.

From October 24, when I met the Tigers at Vavuniya and asked them to take me to Jaffna and the combat zone, till October 28, when I finally left the peninsula, only once did we run into direct IPKF fire, at Chavakacheri, which was being strafed by helicopter gunships. That was adequate indication of how well they know every single lane and by-lane, every lagoon and hiding place, and of the effectiveness of their sophisticated communication network that gives them advance warning of any IPKF movement, unless it is a sudden attack from the skies.

Blindfolded, I was taken to the spot where 18 Indian soldiers are held captive. They are in chains, which are removed for my benefit. Seventeen are from the 8th Mahar Regiment and one from the Sikh Light Infantry. They look cheerful enough, perhaps because they have not heard the horror stories about the 'tyre treatment'—burning tyres put around the necks of captives. "We have been treated well, we eat what our captors eat and there has been no mistreatment," says Gora Singh of the Sikh Light Infantry. Perhaps they are being kept as a propaganda weapon to show the world—or India—that the Tigers are not the brutal terrorists they are being made out to be. Perhaps they may be already dead, victims of a war they know nothing about, executed by an enemy they have never had to face before.

On October 26, I was taken to meet the LTTE's Deputy Commander Mahattaya on the outskirts of Jaffna. When I arrived, I found him instructing his cadres on how to fight the IPKF. He looks like a large, cheerful businessman and nothing like the dreaded number two man in the Tiger hierarchy, next only to the man they call Thambi (younger brother), Velupillai Prabhakaran. His first question was straight to the point: "Are you here as an Indian or a journalist?" On being reassured that I was no spy, he spoke proudly about his boys and their heroics and bitterly about the Indian Government that he says has betrayed the Sri Lankan Tamils. "We will fight to the last man" he says, though he admits that if a cease-fire were offered by the IPKF, they would be willing to consider it, but under the LTTE's conditions. He turns to his boys, gives them rapid-fire instructions. Holding aloft three fingers, he intones: "Stealth, speed and surprise." With that, he sends them off cheerfully into battle.

■ **A grenade with LTTE stamp**

There is no mistaking the complete identification of the Jaffna civilian with the LTTE fighters. But equally, there is no hatred for India, only criticism of the Indian Government and its representatives: High Commissioner J.N. Dixit in Colombo, and Rajiv Gandhi himself, who is referred to as the 'cub fox' while Jayewardene is the 'old fox'. The only occasion when the criticism became more bitter was immediately after the helicopter attack on Chavakacheri.

The real victims of an unreal war are the refugees. They were everywhere, fleeing on foot, on bicycles or hand carts or, for the luckier ones, in trucks, usually through drenching rain. At moments, it appeared that they really had no destination, merely wandering around in circles, anywhere, to escape the deadly sound of gunfire that has become their personal symphony since 1983. The women wept silently as if the tears had run out. All had just one question to ask: when would this madness end? That is a question to which nobody can provide an answer.

PRAMOD PUSHKARNA

IPKF soldiers in Jaffna bunker

REPORT

A BLOODIED ACCORD

THE western press corps currently congregated in Colombo have a name for it—they call it the Five O'clock Follies, the same sobriquet given to the regular press briefings by the US Army in Saigon during the Vietnam war. The comparison may be odious, but the daily 5 p.m. briefings at the new Indian High Commission chancery in Colombo on the Indian Army's operations in Jaffna contained some chilling parallels. The disputed body counts, the territorial tug of war, an invisible enemy, and above all, the growing realisation that it is a war where victory and defeat can mean much the same.

Across the lushly-carpeted, lagoon-laced countryside of the Jaffna peninsula in northern Sri Lanka, the thunder of gunfire was slowly stilled last week. The Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF), after 16 days of battle in unfamiliar terrain, finally wrested control of the Tigers' lair, the labyrinth of narrow, winding lanes and concealed bunkers that make up Jaffna town, the heavily-fortified and thickly-populated stronghold of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

But Operation Pawan, as the IPKF's activities in Sri Lanka is code-named, is a chapter of Indian military history that will contain none of the honour and glory of a victorious campaign. Notwithstanding the fact that the IPKF fought against daunting odds and under severe constraints, the "liberation" of Jaffna last week was essentially what one IPKF officer described as "a dirty little war, and that too by proxy".

For two long weeks, the 20,000-strong IPKF, taken from the Indian Army's 4th, 36th and 54th Divisions, slowly and steadily inched its way across the heavily-mined and booby-trapped areas around Jaffna. Through a withering fire-storm, their five-pronged operational axes (*see map*) then linked up, enabling them to corner the 2,500-odd Tigers holed out in their Jaffna redoubt, many of them the same guerrillas that the Indian Army had obligingly trained in Tamil Nadu to combat the Sri Lankan security forces.

The irony has stretched to tragic dimensions. Despite its vastly superior numbers (INDIA TODAY sources put it at as much as 30,000 apart from the paramilitary contingent), unlimited fire-power and acknowledged professionalism, the IPKF has suffered unexpectedly heavy losses in the fortnight of fierce fighting. Officially, at the end of the 16-day siege of Jaffna, the IPKF admits to 214 dead, including 15 officers, two of them colonels. Another 36 soldiers are missing, captured and presumably killed by the Liberation Tigers, while over 700 IPKF personnel have been wounded in the action. Unofficially, however, army sources admit that the death toll in the first Indian Army

operation that has taken place on foreign soil since 1975, could be closer to 400.

In military terms, those are somewhat inglorious statistics, but then, it was also an inglorious war. Less than three months earlier, the Indian Government sent in, at the request of Sri Lankan President J.R. Jayewardene and under the stated terms of the Indo-Sri Lankan accord, a 6,000-strong army contingent that was, paradoxically, called the Indian Peace Keeping Force. The main brief was to provide protection to the Tamil-dominated population of Sri Lanka's northern province. But only two months later, the IPKF suddenly found itself locked in incongruous combat with the LTTE, which is militarily the most powerful of the Tamil militant groups and which regards itself the self-appointed protector of the local Tamil population.

That tragic turnaround put the IPKF in an unenviable military position—facing guerrilla fighters, many barely in their teens including young women, in a heavily built-up and densely populated urban area already fortified and extensively mined during the three-year-old battle between the militants and Sri Lankan security forces. Admitted Lt-General Depinder Singh, general officer commanding, Southern Command and the overall force commander of the IPKF: "Urban guerrilla war is a comparatively new phenomenon as far as the Indian Army is concerned." More important, the IPKF was hamstrung by their strict orders to avoid heavy civilian casualties and extensive damage to buildings. "Ours had to be a proportioned response. There was large-scale mining of the Jaffna area and almost every building was booby-trapped. The LTTE made extensive use of these buildings and used the civilian population as prophylactic protection. Our progress, therefore, was necessarily slow," says Major-General A.S. Kalkat, director of military operations, Southern Command.

The IPKF, moreover, appears to have miscalculated not only on the fierce resistance put up by the Tigers but the extent of their weaponry as well. Every road leading into Jaffna was pitted with powerful Claymore mines or huge drums filled with explosives buried under the ground. The buildings were booby-trapped with highly sophisticated bombs that were capable of being detonated by remote or radio control from a distance of over a kilometre. In one such explosion that was set off under an army convoy, 29 IPKF personnel were blown up and an equal number were seriously wounded. The IPKF then requested for a regiment of T-72 tanks to counter the mines.

Apart from the mines, the highest number of IPKF casualties were from LTTE snipers located in buildings and even tree-tops, equipped with sophisticated, high-powered rifles with telescopic infra-red sights. At least five helicopters of the Indian Air Force were badly damaged by snipers when they were dropping troops in designated areas. Finally, the IPKF had to induct six armour-plated Mi-24 helicopter gunships since none of the Mi-8s or Chetaks could fly below 2,000 ft without the risk of being shot at.

Map by B.K. SHARMA

The extent and range of the LTTE arsenal made a mockery of the Indian Government's much-publicised arms surrender by the militants in early August. Arms caches were scattered all over the Jaffna area, many wrapped in water-proof packaging and secreted in the myriad lagoons that dot the countryside. The Tigers had a vast arsenal of Chinese-made AK-47 assault rifles, one of the most effective weapons in urban guerrilla warfare, Soviet-made RPG-7 anti-tank rockets, mortars firing 60 mm bombs and shoulder-fired rocket launchers. "They were not very accurate in their marksmanship but they fought like tigers," admits Brigadier Kulwant Singh, deputy divisional commander, Southern Command and one of the key strategists in the battle for Jaffna. The fiercest battles between the Indian Army and the Tigers were fought at Kopai North, Kokuvil and Kurruparai where the LTTE managed to stop the IPKF advance in its tracks. Says Havildar Raosaheb Gaekwad, 38, of the Maratha Regiment: "The people we were fighting were no more than kids. But they seemed to have unlimited ammunition. It was a constant barrage."

Over 100 paratroopers from the 1st Para who were dropped by helicopters on the night of October 11, in the open ground around the Jaffna University area were caught in a merciless cross-fire and suffered the worst casualties of the entire operation. Unofficial sources say over 30 soldiers were killed and 18 soldiers taken prisoner.

Sepoy Lok Ram, 38, of the 1st Para regiment was one of those wounded in the paradrop. Says he: "We thought everything was fine but when we were sliding out of the seventh helicopter, we suddenly came under heavy fire from all sides. It was an impossible situation as people would come out of the houses and fire at us and then disappear. There were gunmen on tree-tops, even on top of coconut trees. Since we were not using heavy weapons, it was impossible to advance. We were surrounded by an enemy we could not even see." The paratroopers were pinned down for 24 hours and were eventually rescued by Indian Army tanks which provided them cover to escape.

Major Anil Kaul, 40, of the armoured regiment, was the first officer to be wounded during the extensive deployment of tanks to rescue IPKF personnel who were cornered by the Tiger guerrillas. Says he: "The Tigers had a contradictory approach. Their movements, the way they took fire, showed professional training. But their tactics were not those of a professional army. We were not fighting a uniformed enemy equipped with the same kind of weapons."

Though part of their training includes urban combat, the Indian Army's strategic planning has never included the kind of urban guerrilla warfare that Jaffna

entailed. Says Havildar Kuldeep Singh of the Sikh Light Infantry, who was badly wounded in the face during the action: "We were pinned down for 12 hours by snipers firing at us from all sides. Five men from our unit died. It was very difficult. We have not been trained for this kind of battle—and we were also ordered not to use any heavy weapons."

The other handicap is their lack of knowledge of the local terrain. Eighteen IPKF soldiers who have been taken prisoner by the Tigers were forced to surrender after the convoy they were in lost its way. The last four trucks in the convoy got separated from the rest and were caught in a cross-fire and pinned down. Of the 24 soldiers travelling in the trucks, five were killed and two were seriously wounded. The remaining 18 were forced to surrender after they ran out of ammunition.

The IPKF's problems were compounded by the fact that it was impossible to distinguish between the Tigers and the Tamil civilians. One senior officer entered a Jaffna house as part of the house-to-house search operations and found it empty except for a young woman. The moment he turned his back to leave, she whipped out a Sten gun and shot him in the back. Says Sepoy Govindan of the Madras Regiment: "It was impossible to say who was a Tiger and who was not. Everyone, male or female, above the age of 10, could be armed and dangerous. We saw little girls producing guns from under their frocks and shooting at us. How do you fight them?"

Very carefully, is the answer that most IPKF commanders reluctantly give. Says Brigadier Manjit Singh of the 41st Infantry Brigade: "They are good fighting men, who are also very highly motivated. And we were fighting with one hand tied behind our backs." In their efforts to minimise damage to buildings and civilians, the IPKF's most powerful weapons were the 105 mm light field artillery, Carl Gustav rocket launchers and the 105 mm guns on their T-72 tanks. Admits Brigadier Kulwant Singh: "We were fighting under constraints that we are not used to."

The turning point in the battle for Jaffna came when the IPKF, under Colonel 'Tippy' Brar, broke out of the Old Dutch Fort area on October 20 after being cornered for over two days, to link up with the other advancing columns of the Indian force and effectively seal off the Nallur area where the Tigers were concentrated.

On October 26, Jaffna fell to the IPKF and the guns were silenced, but the war is far from over. To date, the IPKF claims to have killed over 700 Tigers but, as Major-General Kalkat admits: "We have no actual count since we were busy in advancing and not stopping anywhere to count bodies. All I can say is that their losses were much higher than ours."

But even if their estimates are approximate, the total Tiger strength in Jaffna was estimated at around 2,500, apart from the sympathisers and collaborators from among the local population. In fact, it has been established that many teenagers actually joined the LTTE while the battle was raging and INDIA TODAY actually met a number of young women LTTE fighters bristling with lethal weaponry. The IPKF claims to have taken around 80 Tigers prisoner, which means that at least 1,500 Tigers have managed to evade the IPKF noose and mingle with the locals or have escaped to other areas. LTTE chief Pirabhakaran and other key leaders like Dilip Yogi, Anton Balasingham and the Jaffna commander Mahattaya are believed to have slipped out of Jaffna to regroup in one their many hideouts in the Mannar, Batticaloa, and Vadamarachi areas.

The Indian Army's miscalculation of the Tigers strength and resistance has already had its first casualty in the form of Major-General Harkirat Singh, the man initially put in charge of Operation Pawan. Because of his inability to take over Jaffna quickly, as originally anticipated, Harkirat was made the scapegoat and replaced by Kalkat.

But having lost total faith in the Indian Government and engaged in combat with the IPKF, the Tigers are certain to carry on their guerrilla war using the hit-and-run tactics similar to the terrorists in Punjab. The only difference is that they will be facing the Indian Army who privately admit that they could be bogged down in northern and eastern Sri Lanka for at least another two years. In fact, according to top level defence sources, the Indian Army is in the process of setting up a reserve Southern Command headquarters sector in northern Sri Lanka under Lt-General Khajuria, a former director of Military Intelligence, which obviously means they are prepared to stay around for some time.

Despite the fact that the Indian Army is now left with no southern reserve divisions and at least 30,000 Indian troops will be tied up in Sri Lanka for an indefinite period, that strategy is inevitable. Like the Sikh terrorists in Punjab, the Tigers know the terrain intimately and can mingle with the local population

PRAMOD PUSHKARNA

■ **Home-made mines and rockets captured from LTTE**

LT-GENERAL DEPINDER SINGH

"There were constraints"

THE overall commander of the IPKF *in Sri Lanka is Lt-General Depinder Singh, 58. Masterminding Operation Pawan between Madras and Palaly, the General has so far avoided the press. But last fortnight, he made an exception for* INDIA TODAY. *After a quick dash to Jaffna on October 29, he discussed the* IPKF*'s military strategy, Operation Pawan, and allegations of civilian deaths with Madras Correspondent* S.H. VENKATRAMANI. *Excerpts:*

Q. *Why was the* LTTE *not disarmed by the* IPKF *under the accord's terms?*

A. The charter of the IPKF was to maintain peace between the Sri Lankan Army and the LTTE, not interfere in inter-militant-group clashes. So we were naturally very cautious. If the Sri Lankan Army could not disarm them in four years of fighting, how could we in a day? And we knew that if it came to taking their arms by force it would end in a military confrontation with them.

Q. *What were the main hurdles that the* IPKF *faced in the battle for Jaffna?*

A. Initially, there was a paucity of troops. When the battle broke out, there was only one brigade in the whole of the Jaffna peninsula. There was half a battalion at the front, one at Point Pedro and one west of Palaly. Actually we had not mobilised for war. And each battalion available had only 50 per cent strength; people had gone on leave or for training. Secondly, the LTTE's use of civilians as human shields was a constraint. Thirdly, to avoid damage to civilian life and property we did not employ our full range of heavy weaponry.

Q. *What weaponry did the* IPKF *use?*

A. We used small arms and light mortars only. Later, when we encountered heavily fortified bunkers and resistance from concrete houses, tank guns were used only to knock out bunkers.

Q. *What are the MI-24 helicopter gunships being used for?*

A. There has been a great deal of to and fro movement from the Jaffna peninsula to the neighbouring islands and the mainland of Sri Lanka through the lagoons and shallow waters. This movement in the initial stages, brought in reinforcements of personnel and logistics and later on exfiltrated LTTE cadres from Jaffna. The gunships were used in the lagoon areas to interdict such movement. We used helicopters for carrying troops. But they came under sniper fire. So we had to give orders that they should bring down suppressive fire in turn. I wish to state, categorically, that we did not use offensive air power in the operation to free Jaffna town.

Q. *But the helicopter gunships were*

used in Chavakacheri.

A. Yes. One or two helicopter gunships were used. But we had confirmed military intelligence that the Tigers were present in sufficient strength in Chavakacheri. Also, we had two companies of our soldiers east of Chavakacheri, and there were two battalions of the Madras regiment in Navatkuli. The idea was for the battalions in Navatkuli to link up with the two companies east of Chavakacheri, but we met with strong resistance from the Tigers. So we were forced to use the gunships. We have only four or five helicopter gunships in Jaffna. There were admittedly a few civilian casualties in Chavakacheri, the death toll was 27.

Q. *How much support did the Tigers have from the local population?*

A. The LTTE had been running the civil administration in Jaffna for the last few years. In the process, the civilians had been intimidated to toe the LTTE line. There were, of course, some active sympathisers, but I cannot believe that the vast majority also actively sympathised. There were instances where the LTTE instructed the local populace not to visit IPKF facilities to record complaints or seek medical assistance. Despite this admonition, the civil population continued to visit. Now that we have entered Jaffna there have been cases, gradually increasing in number, where civilians have volunteered information about the location of LTTE camps and caches. I can say with confidence that the vast majority of civilians are interested only in peace.

Q. *Was the* IPKF *prepared or trained for the kind of urban guerrilla warfare involved in the operations?*

A. Urban guerrilla warfare is a comparatively new phenomenon for the Indian Army. But given the professional competence of the junior leaders and the men's dedication, it didn't take long to understand the nuances of this type of environment and master them.

Q. *Considering that many of the Tigers have escaped, what strategy will the* IPKF *adopt to protect the local population and counter the guerrilla war that is certain to continue?*

A. At worst, it will involve deploying for a classic counter insurgency scenario. However, I am sanguine that cut off from the free use of Jaffna and its facilities, the LTTE will join the peace process. Our immediate stress is on relief, renovation, and rehabilitation.

Q. *There have been allegations of heavy civilian casualties, and soldiers going berserk and raping women.*

A. It has been our endeavour, at considerable risk to our officers and jawans, to keep damage of civilian property and life to the minimum. And, as the heavy casualties of our officers indicate, they have led from the front and therefore, the question of indiscipline just cannot hold water. For every two or three armed men, the LTTE has another two or three unarmed sympathisers. And in a fire fight, they take all their casualties to hospitals and register them all as civilians. I certainly think it dishonourable to pull out people from a house, line them up, and shoot them. We have not done that at all. But if soldiers return fire and direct it at a house from which they were fired upon, you can't accuse them of killing civilians. They can't distinguish between civilians and LTTE cadres in that house.

without detection. Whether out of fear or sympathy, they also have the support of the local population. Also, despite the Indian Navy's blockade of the Palk Straits, a number of boats have managed to slip through the cordon and reach the Tamil Nadu coastline. That could also mean that boats carrying arms and ammunition can still get through to the Tigers. In any event, the Tigers seem to have no shortage of ammunition at the moment. The LTTE's Jaffna commander and currently the number two man after Pirabhakaran, Mahattaya, told INDIA TODAY last week: "We are short of weapons though we have plenty of ammunition. But the IPKF is fooling itself if it thinks it has cut off our supply lines."

There are also signs that the LTTE will link up with the outlawed Sinhalese extremist group, the JVP, which has been responsbile for a number of recent killings and bomb explosions in south Sri Lanka, including the one that almost killed President Jayewardene and key members of his cabinet last August. Similarly, the powerful bomb that ripped through the office of the assistant high commissioner of India at the tourist resort of Kandy in southern Sri Lanka last week is one indication of the Tigers' capability to strike at Indian targets outside the northern and eastern provinces either on their own or in collaboration with the JVP.

The IPKF's immediate goal in the north is to isolate the LTTE leadership from the cadres or wipe them out in the belief that the less committed members will surrender under the terms of the amnesty they are being offered. That, however, could be wishful thinking. None of the key leaders, specially Pirabhakaran, will allow themselves to be taken alive. If cornered, they will almost certainly swallow the cyanide capsules that is their trademark. Pirabhakaran as a martyr to the Eelam cause is as potent as Pirabakaran alive.

However, Mahattaya told INDIA TODAY on October 27: "We will be willing to a cease-fire under three conditions. The Indian Army should cease-fire immediately. The IPKF should return to the camps where they were prior to October 10, and only then will we be willing to talk about surrender of arms." However, those are conditions that the Indian Government will obviously not agree to. Nor is it clear whether Mahattaya is speaking for a section of the LTTE or even Pirabhakaran.

In any event, the task before the Indian Government is to win over the local population in northern Sri Lanka. The Indian Government is already flooding Jaffna with food and medicines. It will also undertake a crash programme to rebuild damaged houses, as well as set up projects to ensure employment for the local population. Last week, in an attempt to bring about normalcy and get the economic wheels moving again, Indian doctors and government engineers were flown in to restore essential services like hospitals, electricity, water-supply and food distribution. This will be followed by all-out efforts to set up the ill-fated interim administration and raise a Tamil police force for the north.

But the success or failure of that mission will largely depend on the kind of damage there has been to civilian property and the number of civilian deaths during Operation Pawan. IPKF sources claim that civilian casualties were unavoidable considering the type of war they had to fight, but insist that the numbers are minimal. However, many independent reports from Jaffna have spoken about large-scale civilian deaths but in the welter of propaganda and counter-propaganda being put out by the Indian Government and the Tigers, it is impossible to establish the truth. Certainly, INDIA TODAY was eyewitness to one incident when Mi-24 helicopter gunships bombed and strafed the town of Chavakacheri, 32 km east of Jaffna and 20 civilians were killed. The Indian Government first denied that helicopter gunships were being used in an offensive operational role. Once it became clear that the eyewitness reports would appear in the Indian press, they finally admitted that the incident had taken place but still claim that it is the only one of its kind. They also claimed that only an "isolated building" where suspected Tigers were hiding had been shelled. INDIA TODAY was witness to the fact that shells had landed in the main market-place and the main bus-stand where large numbers of civilians had gathered.

The Tigers, in their propaganda war from Jaffna, claimed that over 200 civilians have been killed by the IPKF and numerous buildings, including the Jaffna Hospital, destroyed. The Catholic Church in Jaffna has put the number of civilian deaths at 100. Some western journalists who entered Jaffna after the battle started, have returned with horror stories of IPKF troops going berserk after their comrades

■ **IPKF personnel occupy a Tiger bunker in the heart of Jaffna**

were killed and accused them of shooting innocent people and of raping Tamil women. The Tigers refer to the IPKF as the Innocent People Killing Force.

Till the Indian Government started flying in journalists and photographers into Jaffna, the Tigers were clearly winning the propaganda war. The only way for journalists to enter Jaffna was with the LTTE. It is difficult to establish whether the so-called victims of IPKF atrocities were tutored by the Tigers or were genuine. Jaffna Hospital, which the Tigers claimed was bombed by the IPKF, was free from any major damage when journalists were taken there last week.

Certainly, judging by the ferocity of the action, civilian deaths would have been impossible to avoid. But on the other hand, the Indian Army is not a rag-tag indisciplined outfit like the Sri Lankan security forces. It is a highly professional and disciplined force that has been compared to the best in the world. Says Lt-General Depinder Singh: "I cannot believe that Indian troops will ever go berserk to the extent of raping or killing women as it is against our ethos and our culture. Further, as the heavy casualties to our officers and JCO's indicate, they led from the front and therefore the question of indiscipline just does not hold water."

Yet, there can be no denying that the local Tamil population currently views the IPKF with suspicion and even hatred, though they also see them as tools in a larger geo-political strategy. Says Dilip Yogi, one of the top LTTE leaders: "We do not blame Rajiv but his advisers who are misleading him on the situation. We do not blame the Indian soldiers, they are only carrying out orders. But we will never surrender. We can keep fighting for another 10 or 20 years. For every Tiger killed, another is born."

Clearly, the IPKF has an unenviable task ahead and in private, senior army officers are already making comparisons with Vietnam and Afghanistan. But that is more the fault of South Block than the soldiers who are merely carrying out the orders of their political bosses. The Indian Government's main bungle was in not disarming the militants when they had the chance immediately after the signing of the accord. IPKF officers say they were instructed to turn a blind eye to the arms that the militants had cached away or were even openly flaunting. Obviously, New Delhi had been over-confident of handling "the boys".

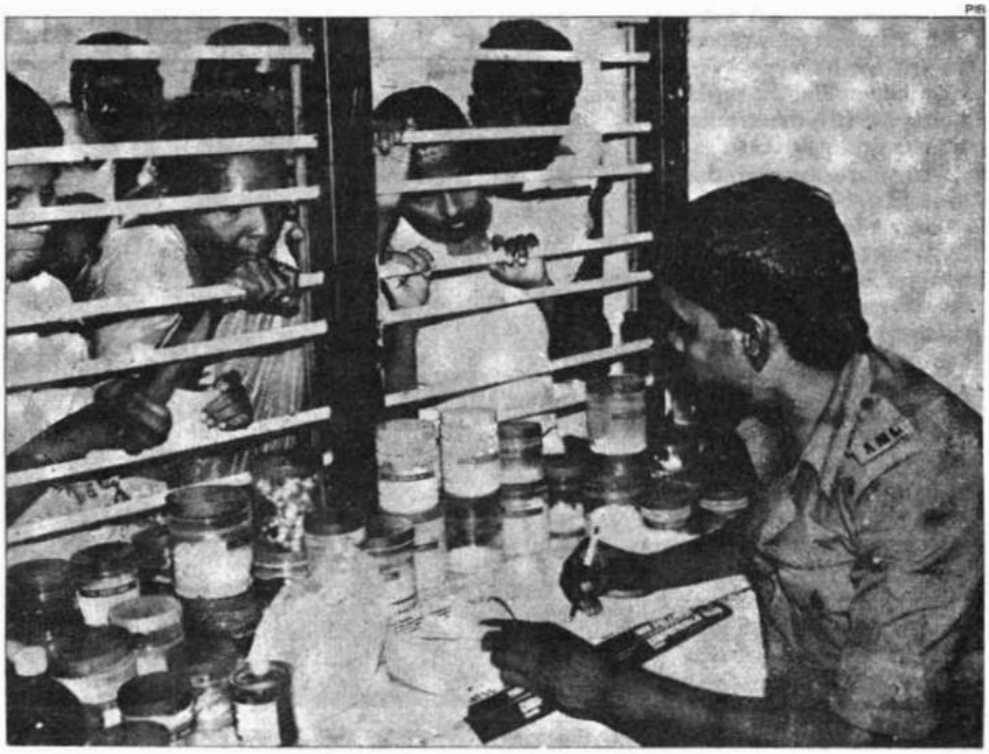
New Delhi's next and most serious blunder was in their attempts to cut the LTTE down to size and prop up the other rival militant groups in the classic political strategy of divide and rule. "The idea was to reduce the dominance of the Tigers since the other groups were under our control and thus ensure that the interim administration and the provincial council had more people who would abide by Delhi's directives," says a senior intelligence source. But that strategy backfired when the groups engaged in a bloody internecine battle which left hundreds dead and a larger number of civilians killed in massacres. That one aspect alone destroyed the image of the IPKF as a force that would ensure security for the Tamil population, and the Tigers played on that with considerable effectiveness.

Now, having taken Jaffna with such heavy cost—an estimated Rs 3 crore a day in terms of money, apart from the loss of lives—the politicians are once again back in the game. New Delhi's strategy is to fully disarm the militants, a near-impossible task, and win over the local population by ensuring that:

- there is no colonisation by the Sri Lankan Government in the eastern province;
- Tamil refugees in India are returned to Sri Lanka as early as possible;
- the devolution package envisaged in the accord is fully implemented;
- the merger of the northern and eastern provinces under one administrative unit takes place;
- a Tamil police force is set up as quickly as possible; and
- Tamils are permitted to enrol in the Sri Lankan Army.

Says an Indian High Commission source: "We have extracted all these assurances from the highest levels of the Sri Lankan Government. If Colombo reneges on any of the conditions, they are in worse trouble than before. With 20,000 Indian troops sitting in the country, it will lead to another Cyprus-type division. We are confident that Jayewardene will not allow that to happen."

Fortunately for New Delhi, the reaction in Tamil Nadu to the IPKF offensive against the Tigers has been muted. In a recent poll in the state, 67 per cent of those interviewed said that Rajiv had not let



PIB

■ **Distributing medicines to refugees at Jaffna Hospital**

down the Tamils. A majority also believed that the LTTE was responsible for starting the trouble and that the IPKF should stay on in Sri Lanka. The Karunanidhi-led opposition DMK has, however, launched a massive protest campaign against the IPKF offensive that could snowball in coming days. Says party President M. Karunanidhi: "We will continue our agitation till the Indian Army stops its actions in Jaffna." Adds party General Secretary K. Veeramani: "The Mossad stood to gain by their actions in Sri Lanka. The Indian Government, on the other hand, is

to ignore them altogether in their future negotiations on the composition of the interim administration and the provincial councils. That may prove another fatal mistake. The LTTE may have lost much sympathy for its intransigence and brutality, but the Tigers are still seen in northern Sri Lanka as the only people who gave their lives to protect the Tamils against the Sri Lankan security forces when other groups like the Tamil United Liberation Front were safely ensconced in Colombo or Tamil Nadu.

But the key issue is that with the most

SUBHA NEWS

■ **Anti-IPKF demonstration by D K volunteers in Madras city**

spending Rs 3 crore every day of the taxpayer's money for their operations."

But the fact that the major offensive against the Tigers is over could blunt the thrust of the anti-IPKF movement, unless, of course, there are confirmed reports of large-scale civilian killings by the IPKF. In any case, if Chief Minister M.G. Ramachandran, currently undergoing medical treatment in distant Baltimore, puts his weight behind the Indian Government, public opinion in Tamil Nadu will remain subdued. Rajiv in fact met MGR in New York last fortnight and is believed to have solicited his full support.

The danger is that with the LTTE having lost Jaffna—a major psychological defeat—New Delhi might be tempted

dominant Tamil group having taken on the Indian Army, the accord itself could be the biggest casualty. The Tigers have resumed their battle for Eelam and thus rejected the accord. Jayewardene stated last fortnight that the elections to the provincial councils in the northern and eastern provinces will only take place "after the complete cessation of hostilities, the surrender of all arms and other weapons in the hands of the terrorists and the resettlement of all those who had been displaced owing to violence".

By even the most conservative estimates, to fulfil any of those conditions will take at least a year, at most, forever. Under the terms of the accord, elections to the provincial councils were to be held within

three months, that is, October 29, or, "in any event before 31st December". That is now clearly impossible and the actual elections could be stalled indefinitely. Further, Indian negotiators are now unlikely to even consider the LTTE in any future provincial council set-up, which will rob it of much of its credibility in the eyes of the Tamil people.

Already, in Colombo, the Sri Lanka Freedom Party leader Srimavo Bandaranaike has challenged the constitutionality of the Provincial Council Bill in the Supreme Court. The bill, in any case, requires a two-thirds majority in Parliament to become part of the Constitution. That step could now prove a major hurdle with the anti-accord JVP having started a terror campaign against ruling party MPs, having already killed three and, in other cases, members of their families. Under that kind of threat, their support for the bill is in serious question.

However, Jayewardene, by staying away from the Vancouver Commonwealth meeting, has demonstrated that he means to stick by the accord and use all his considerable political guile to keep his party and cabinet in line. For him, considering the widespread opposition to the accord by the majority Sinhalese, the accord was as much of a gamble as it was for Rajiv. "The average Sinhalese may be gloating over the fact that we are doing their dirty work for them, but the fact is that Jayewardene is determined to ensure the accord works, however long it takes to implement," says an Indian High Commision source in Colombo.

But so far, none of the initial clauses of the accord —the lifting of the emergency conditions in the north and east, the provincial council elections and the interim administration, disarming the militants—has been implemented. If the Tigers continue to hold out against the IPKF, which is more than likely, the accord could collapse by default. The IPKF may have cleared one dangerous minefield but another, infinitely more dangerous one, lies ahead.

—DILIP BOBB in Jaffna with
S.H. VENKATRAMANI in Madras
and M. REHMAN in Pune

NOVEMBER 15, 1987 ◆

AFFIDAVIT

Mrs. ALAGAMMAH SINNATHURAI (66), Nuragiyapulam, Alaveddy South, Alaveddy.

I am the widow of the late Sinnathamby Sinnadurai who was killed in gun-fire by the IPKF on 11.11.87.

At about 5.00 p.m. on 11.11.87, IPKF who had already taken positions in Alaveddy, kept on firing when my husband who was standing in the courtyard was struck by bullets.

He received a severe bleeding gun-shot injury on his right thigh and died on the spot.

His body was cremated in an open land close to the house on 12.11.87 at about 11.00 a.m.

My husband ran a dairy and earned an average monthly income of Rs. 1,000/-.

I and my three unmarried daughters have now been left without any maintenance or support for our existence since the demise of my husband.

ARUMUGAM ARUNTAVARAJAH
Poothar Madam, Kopay North, Kopay.

N.I.C. No. 321932045 V.

On 11.11.87 there was shelling and a shell fell on our house and my mother in law Theivanaipillai widow of Sinnathamby died on the spot. We ran away from the house carrying the body.

We cremated the body in the evening.

I am attaching the death certificate No. 5088 issued by the Registrar of Deaths

Cause of Death: - Death due to fall of shell.

NADARAJAH PARAMASIVAM (54) New Chemmany Road, Nallur North, Jaffna.

The deceased Nadarajah Rasammah, aged 79 years was my mother.

My mother was living with my sister at Tellipalai during the October-November 1987 military offensive.

On 11.11.87 at about 5.30 p.m. I was informed that my mother was killed when a shell exploded within the home compound at 3.30 p.m.

I rushed to my mother's place and found her body which bore injuries on her head and buttock.

Her body was cremated at Tellipalai Cemetery on 12.11.87.

NALLAMMAH, widow of the late Antony Marucilin, (35) Nitchamam, Chankanai.

My late mother Sinnapillai widow of Suppar, aged 66 years lived with me and was maintained and looked after by me.

On 11.11.87 at about 2 p.m. when my mother Sinnapillai was seated on the verandah a shell fell on the house and exploded.

Shrapnels darting from the explosion caused severe injuries on her head and neck and she bled profusely. She succumbed to her injuries in a few minutes.

Her body was cremated at the Nitchamam Hindu crematorium at about 11 a.m. on 12.11 87.

I was first married to Sinnaddi Veerasingham who deserted me in 1973 and I married Antony Marucilin in December 1973 who died in June 1980.

I am a widow and have two children and both are school going.

RAMASWAMY NAVODAYAN (39) Courts Road, Mallakam.

The deceased Ramupillai Ramasamy aged 77 years was my father.

He was a retired estate teacher.

On 11.11.87 at around 4.30 p.m. a shell fired by the army fell in front of our house and exploded.

My father was seriously injured in the blast and we were unable to take him to the hospital due to the 24 hours curfew imposed in our area.

He died on 12.11.87 without any medical help.

As my mother and sister are abroad my father was living with my family until he met his tragic death.

SIVAPALAN LEVATHYANNAH (30), a widow Chavalkadu, Suthumalai.

The injured child Yogeswary alias Sivanthini, aged 5 years is my daughter.

Due to the October-November 1987 military offensive I sought refuge at the Manipay Hindu College.

On 11.1.87 at about 4.00 p.m. a shell crashed through the roof of the school building and exploded.

My husband Iyathurai Sivapalan died on the spot after being struck by shell splinters.

My daughter sustained lacerated wounds on her left knee and left hand.

She was taken to the Jaffna General Hospital on 12.11.87.

She was warded till 22.11.87.

The diagnosis card is attached herewith.

After the incident she is unable to walk as the shrapnel damaged the knee cap.

She finds it difficult for her to flex her fingers on her left hand due to the injuries she sustained.

I have three children.

Mrs. THAMBIPILLAI ANNAMMAH (55)
Chunnakam West, Chunnakam.

I am married, have 5 sons and 4 daughters of whom 2 sons and I daughter are married and live separately.

My eldest son R. Satkunalingam (36) is a driver and a bachelor and the only earning member in our family.

My husband Thambipillai aged 75 years was a farmer and now he is sick and feeble and bed-ridden.

At 11.00 a.m. on 11.11.87 my eldest son Satkunalingam left home with his sister Naguleswary on a bicycle to Inuvil Mc-Leod private hospital taking lunch to a relation of mine who was sick.

To my dismay, when I was at home awaiting for my son and daughter, at 2.00 p.m. my daughter Naguleswary brought the dead body of my son Satkunalingam in a van with the assistance of the people from Inuvil.

I was informed by my daughter Naguleswary that my son Satkunalingam was shot dead by the Indian Peace Keeping Force near Inuvil Theatre at about 12.00 noon when they were proceeding to the above private hospital.

Cremation of the dead body of my son was held at Koththiyalaci Cemetery. Chunnakam at 4.00 p.m. the same day.

My daughter Naguleswary who accompanied my deceased son at the time of incident escaped injuries by the grace of God.

My deceased son bore bullet injuries on his chest.

The sudden demise of my son the sole bread-winner caused me a great hardship and pain of mind and mental stress.

THURAISAMY RASAMMAH (48) widow of Kumarakottam, Kondavil.

The deceased Thuraisamy Kirubaharamoorthy **aged 22 years was my son.**

On 11.11.87 at about 9 a.m. my son left home in his bicycle.

Little later I was informed that my son was shot and killed by an army patrol close to the Arasady Pilliyar Temple, Kondavil which is about quarter mile distance from our house.

I came to know that my son was chased and shot by soldiers who came in an army jeep.

I learned that his body was removed immediately by the army in their jeep.

Due to the tension prevailed during that period I would not leave my house.

I do not know what happened to his body afterwards.

I have four children.

My husband died six years ago.

THOMASPILLAI VIRSITTAMMAH (63) Tholagatty Vasavilan.

The deceased person Nagarathinam Manoharam Thomaspillai, aged 72 years was my husband.

He was a retired mechanic of the Ceylon Electricity Board.

On 11.11.1987 our area was subjected to intensive shelling.

At about 7.00 p.m. a shell crashed through the roof of our house and exploded with a tremendous noise.

A portion of our house was completely damaged in the blast.

My husband who miraculously escaped from the shrapnels fell ill instantaneously due to the shock.

We could not take him to the Hospital due to the tense situation prevailed during the period.

He expired on 18.11.87 without recovering from his illness.

His body was buried at the Thologaty burial ground on 19.11.87.

I have four children and a grand child.

My son Jonshon lost his use of his right hand after being shot and injured by the army in 1986.

My son Terrenson and daughter Grace Violet are suffering from asthma and remain at home.

My grand daughter Yogeswary is living under our care and maintenance after her mother re-married after being deserted by her husband.

THANGARANI widow of Ponniah Navaratnam, Soranpattu, Pallai.

I was married to the late Mr. Ponniah Navaratnam on the 13th August, 1976, according to Hindu Rites, at my residence at Soranpattu, Pallai, and have four children by the said marriage.

My parents are 1. Sinnar Kandiah (father) and Selliah Vallipillai (mother.)

The parents of my late husband are (1) Murugar Ponniah (father) and (2) Nagappu Thangammah (mother).

My husband died on the 11th October 1987, due to gun shot injuries caused by the IPKF.

Miss. THEIVAMANY SINNATHURAI C/o Mr. M. Elayathamby, Navalar School Lane, Kopay South, Kopay.

Since the death of my both parents I have been depending on my younger brother Subramaniam Sinnathurai, aged 37 years who was a bachelor and was a farmer by profession.

We have been cultivating an agricultural land to an extent of 10 lachchams and out of the income from the garden produce the family was maintained.

At the time the unrest and abnormal which existed in Jaffna peninsula on and after the 10th October, 1987, there were tension andpanic among the people of the area and nearby areas and were fleeing away from their resisdence in securing shelter and protection, but at the same time we both remained in the house and unfortunately on the 15th Ocotber, 1987 **my younger brother the above-named sustained inuries as a result of the piercement of the sharpnels from the exploded shell which had fallen on my brother in law Mr. M. Elayathamby's house. Due to lack of proper treatment, my younger brother died on 7.11.87.**

Due to the above said incident I have sustained a loss to the tune of sum of Rs. 25,000/- being the garden produces and the death of the livestocks;

Since the death of my younger brother late Sinnathurai Subramaniam who was the only sole bread-winner of the family, I have been displaced and is placed under destitute circumstances without proper income out a livelihood.

ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL WEEKLY

Peace by Force: Lankan Tamils' Tragedy

M S S Pandian

COMMENT

The armed intervention by India in the Jaffna peninsula has given added legitimacy to the LTTE which represents Tamil national chauvinism in its most populist and ruthless form. If the Sri Lanka Tamils have believed that national chauvinism is the answer to their national oppression by Colombo, this conviction is now going to be enormously strengthened.

November 14, 1987

IN holding out the olive-branch to the Tamils, the Sri Lankan president J R Jayewardene played the coquette. His sudden love for the Tamils was to avert an impending military coup which would have swept him off the centre-stage of Sri Lankan politics. The fact of the impending coup was admitted by Colombo after the Indian Peace Keeping Forces (IPKF) reached Sri Lanka on July 30. There were other compelling and immediate reasons as well, which forced Jayewardene to make peace with the Tamils of the embattled northern and eastern provinces of the island nation. The Janatha Vimukthi Perumuna (JVP), which authored the 1971 armed insurrection against Sirimavo Bandaranaika's rule and preaches a blend of radicalism and Sinhala chauvinism, was threatening to stage a comeback in southern Sri Lanka. There were reports about the JVP's infiltration into the Sri Lankan defence forces.

If India saw reason in Jayewardene's proposal for peace, it was for its own reasons. Jayewardene's offer to allow India to have its say in the use of strategically important Trincomalee port by foreign powers and to have military collaboration with India was a sure temptation for a country which wants to extend its regional supremacy in South Asia. For India to pursue peace in Sri Lanka is to pursue its own goal of gaining regional supremacy. South Block, which had ranted all along about the insincerity of Jayewardene in finding a solution to the Tamil question in his country, suddenly found in him a saviour for the Tamils.

The Indo-Sri Lanka accord of July 28, which was based on these two different interests, has failed to get off the ground. If the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) is blamed today for the failure of the accord, that is only part of the truth. The most important factor which led to the collapse of the accord was the very nature of the accord.

The most potent self-destructive clause in the accord is section 2.3 which provides for a referendum to be conducted latest by December 1988 in the eastern province to decide whether "the eastern province would remain with the northern province as one administrative unit" or not. This means, if the result of the referendum goes against the long-standing and principal Tamil demand of creating an autonomous Tamil province by merging the northern and eastern provinces, they will lose what they have fought for so long. Justifiably the Tamils consider the northern and eastern provinces as their traditional homeland. There is sufficient evidence to show that this section of the accord is a deliberate device by the Sri Lankan state to leave the Tamils high and dry after they surrender their arms.

First, J R Jayewardene himself made it known that he was against merging the northern and eastern provinces. Soon after signing the Indo-Sri Lanka accord, he went on record saying he would campaign during the referendum against the merger. This statement of Jayewardene betrays his true intentions.

Secondly, Jayewardene, in the post-accord period, made blatant efforts to discredit the LTTE in the eastern province. The original list of nominees suggested by the LTTE for the interim administrative council had a number of names from the eastern province, though it suggested the name of a Jaffna Tamil, Sivagnanam, to head the council. Jayewardene rejected the names of the LTTE's nominees from the

Ravi Shankar, Indian Express, 14.11.87

eastern province. The LTTE tried to overcome the new situation by suggesting the name of a Batticaloa Tamil, Padmanathan, as the head of the council instead of Sivagnanam. Neither Jayewardene nor India accepted the LTTE's suggestion, the implication of which is only too clear. Jayewardene wanted to paint the LTTE as partisan, favouring the northern province Tamils—a campaign point against the LTTE during the referendum. On this issue, nothing can be truer than what the political committee of the LTTE had to say in its statement dated October 13: "Jayewardene has had the wily idea of grabbing the eastern province of the Tamils. That is why he rejected the selection made by the LTTE from the eastern province for the interim administrative council. . ."

Thirdly, the present day ethnic distribution of population in the traditional Tamil stronghold of the eastern province is not in favour of the Tamils. If traditionally the eastern province was predominantly populated by the Tamils, today there is an equal number of Tamil Hindus, Moors and Sinhalese in the province. The main reason for this shift in the ethnic distribution of population is that, during the last twenty years, the Sri Lankan state has been deliberately settling Sinhalese in the eastern province under state-sponsored land colonisation schemes. Land colonisation by the Sinhalese under Gal Oya and Padaviya irrigation schemes are telling examples of how the Sri Lankan state wants to reduce the Tamils to a minority in the eastern province. If the Sinhalese will not vote for the merger of the eastern and the northern provinces, the Tamil-speaking Moors may also decide against the merger. Over the years, the Sri Lankan state has been successful in brewing trouble between the Tamil Hindus and the Moors of the eastern province. Given these factors, there is a high probability of the referendum going against the Tamil demand of merging the two provinces.

Importantly, even after the Indo-Sri Lanka accord was signed, there had been cases of state-sponsored land colonisation by the Sinhalese in the eastern province and Jayewardene himself said, if necessary, he would deploy the Sri Lankan armed forces to provide security to the newly settled Sinhalese in the province. If a 23-year old LTTE cadre Amirthalingam Thileepan died in Jaffna after 12 days of protest fasting, one of his five demands was that India should stop Sinhala land colonisation in the eastern province.

While the provision for referendum in the eastern province is a time-bomb set inside the accord meant to destroy the accord itself after the Tamil militants lay down arms, there are other events that expose the insincerity of the parties to the accord in implementing the accord. We shall cite only one instance— the denial of amnesty to and the subsequent death of 13 LTTE cadres, including the LTTE's Jaffna commander Kumarappa and Trincomalee commander Pulendran. The Sri Lankan state denied amnesty to seventeen LTTE cadres arrested in the high seas of Sri Lanka and decided to fly them to Colombo for interrogation. In Sri Lanka interrogation is a honourable word for torture. The LTTE asked India to secure the release of its arrested cadres and forewarned that they would, otherwise, end their lives by committing suicide. India did not put sufficient pressure on the Sri Lankan national security minister Lalit Athulatmudali, who is more a Sinhala hawk than anything else, to abide by the amnesty provision of the accord. The LTTE men waited till the last minute and consumed their cyanide not anywhere else but on the tarmac of Palaly air-base minutes before they were to be flown to Colombo. It is an irony of history that Palaly was the very air-base where the LTTE representative Yogi received the general amnesty papers for the Tamil militants from the Sri Lankan defence secretary general Attingalle on August 5.

In this scenario where does one place the LTTE, the Tamil militant organisation which is responsible for the cold-blooded murder of Sinhala civilians and fellow Tamils belonging to rival militant organisations? In one word, the LTTE stands for Tamil national chauvinism in its most populist and ruthless form. The LTTE is the second tragedy of the Sri Lankan Tamils, if the Sinhala chauvinism of Colombo is their first tragedy. It is unfortunate that the armed intervention of the IPKF in Jaffna peninsula (Operation Pawan) has given added legitimacy to the LTTE among the Tamils of Jaffna peninsula and thus paved the way to prolong this tragedy of the Tamils. There are various means by which Operation Pawan has committed this historic blunder.

First, during Operation Pawan, not only has the civilian population in Jaffna endured untold suffering, but a large number of them have lost their lives. Contrary to the external affairs ministry's claim, now one knows quite a bit about what happened to the civilians in Jaffna at the hands of the so-called Indian Peace Keeping Forces. The BBC correspondent Phil Jones, whom the LTTE smuggled into Jaffna by sea reported that civilian casualities in Jaffna ran into thousands. He also recounted how the Indian army reduced Tamil business areas in Jaffna to rubbles. The Sri Lankan correspondent of *The Hindu*, D B S Jeyaraj, who stayed in Jaffna from October 10 to 20, reported shelling of and serial attacks on residential areas in Jaffna by the Indian army. According to his head-count about 200 civilians were killed and 500 injured during the first ten days of Operation Pawan. He further reported that local residents of Kokuvil confirmed the widespread rumour in Jaffna town that the Indian army killed 40 civilians and run over seven of the bodies with heavy armoured cars as retaliation against the LTTE killing 29 Indian army commandoes. When Brig Manjit Singh of Indian army said, "the LTTE has achieved a certain amount of success in maligning the IPKF", possibly he meant that the IPKF itself has done a substantial part of this job for the LTTE.

Secondly, the LTTE cadres, who are mostly in their teens or early twenties, engaged the Indian army in fierce fighting for fifteen days. They died fighting the Indian armymen or escaped into jungle hideouts to engage the IPKF in a war of attrition in future. But not a single LTTE cadre bartered away his or her gun for the amnesty offered by the IPKF. The supreme commander of the LTTE, Velupillai Prabhakaran, whose capture would have earned the IPKF one million Sri lankan rupees from Jayewardene, did an incredible disappearing act. The Tamils of Jaffna peninsula will not overlook the immense self-sacrifice of these Tamil youth and will treat them as heroes. What they will obviously overlook, given the IPKF's role in Jaffna, is the grotesque ideology of the LTTE.

Thirdly, the Indian army never tried to convince the Tamils that they were in Jaffna not to wage a war against the Tamils. During Operation Pawan, the LTTE offered at least thrice (on October 14, 17 and 21) to come to the negotiating table. But the Indian army never utilised any of these opportunities to declare a unilateral cease-fire which would have helped to counter the popular Tamil opinion that the IPKF are Jayewardene's mercenaries out to decimate the Tamils. The LTTE took the brunt of Operation Pawan.

In short, all these facts indicate that the bursts of gunfire one predicts will be heard from the jungle hideouts of the LTTE will have the popular support of the civilian population in the Jaffna peninsula. Operation Pawan has given a longer life-span to what the LTTE stands for—Tamil national chauvinism. If the Tamils have believed, though wrongly, that national chuavinism is the solution to their national oppression by Colombo, now they are going to believe in national chauvinism more strongly and for a longer time. This is the worst thing India has done to the Sri Lankan Tamils so far.

AFFIDAVIT

Mrs. YOGESWARAN THILAKAMBIKAIYAMMAH (59)
Kandarodai, Chunakam presently residing at No. 457, K.K.S. Road, Jaffna.

My deceased husband Eliyathamby Yogeswaran aged 51 years was a Teacher.

My 5 children all under 19 years and I were living with my late husband at the above mentioned Kantharodai address.

My husband left home on 11.11.87 at 2.15 p.m. after having his lunch on a bicycle to the Jaffna General Hospital to visit his aged mother who was admitted in the above Hospital.

As he did not return home till late in the evening or thereafter I started searching for him with the assistance of the neighbours but my efforts proved futile.

I continued my search for about one month with the help of my relations without success.

After about two and a half months, on 12.01.1988 on an information my elder brother Dr S. Sivaramalingam proceeded to Muthali Lane, Kokuvil and found that my husband Yogeswaran had been shot dead by the Indian Peace Keeping Force on 11.11.87 in the evening when he was proceeding to Jaffna General Hospital.

Thereafter it was confirmed when my brother Sivaramalingam found his spectacles and a Vesti that he had been wearing on that day when he left home near the above lane where he had been shot dead.

Further it was reported that the dead body of my husband had been buried by the people of the area after 5 or 6 days.

The untimely death of my husband is an irreparable loss to my family.

T. Yogeswaran

KANAPATHY SOODAMANY, (75) Punnalaikadduvan North, Chunnakam.

The deceased Avudaiammah Soodamany, aged 55 years was my wife.

My wife was admitted to the General Hospital Jaffna in June 1987 for an operation in her abdomen.

On 12.11.87 I came to know through my daughter that my wife died due to gunshot injuries and grenade attack at the Jaffna General Hospital on 21.10.87.

I also came to know that her body was cremated with the hospital compound on the same day.

I have an unmarried daughter named Sathyabhama aged 40 years.

MUTHIAH NADESU, (75) C/o Chinniah Kanthiah, Invuil West, Inuvil.

The deceased Kanthiah Gopalapillai, aged 32 years was my step - son being the offspring of my wife from a previous marriage.

He was employed as watcher in a coconut oil mill at Inuvil.

I came to know that my step-son was shot and killed at his work place on 12.11.87, during the November, 1987 military offensive.

I was also informed that his body was cremated at Inuvil.

It was my late step-son who supported me.

After his death I do not have any income and undergoing severe hardships.

VALLIPILLAI (50)
NIC No. 377190513V. Residing near Railway Station, Kondavil.

There was heavy shell-fire directed on our area on 12th November 1987.

When the firing started, I and my family including my deceased husband hurriedly moved to the Karaikal Sivan Temple where we took refuge.

At about 1 p.m. on 12th November 1987 my husband returned home to collect provisions and secure the valuables there.

At about 4 p.m. on finding my husband had not returned, I was uneasy and worried but there was no possibility of going back home to look for him as there was constant shell firing.

At about 5 p.m. a neighbour informed me that my husband was killed in a shell explosion and that my house was burnt.

I and my eldest son immediately went home and found my husband lying dead in the court-yard with his stomach stripped and the intestine come out due to shell-fire.

I and my son Pulendran took the body of my dead husband in a cart to the General crematorium at Karaikadu at 6 p.m. on the same day of 12.11.87 where we cremated the body.

/The death was registered on 2.1.88 with the registrar of Deaths, Jaffna (General) who issued Death Certificate bearing No. 773.

NALLATHAMBY PARIMALAM (58) Karanthan Neerveli.

The deceased Kanthiah Nallathamby, aged 70 years was my husband.

He was a Farmer.

On 13.11.87 at about 11.30 a.m. my husband left home to buy some medicine for me as I was indisposed at that time.

As he did not return home I became highly worried.

Only on the following day being 14.11.87 at about 8 a.m. I came to know that my husband was shot and killed by the army at Urelu Pilliyar Temple Road.

His body was cremated in a near by field on the same day.

I have an unmarried daughter Jagatheeswary, aged 25.

We do not have any income or support after my husband's death.

Mrs MEENAMBIKAI APPAIAH (56)
Kalaiyadi, Pandateruppu.

My husband Visvalingam Appaiah (67) was a driver.

My husband, un-married children and I were living with my married daughter in her house.

On 14.11.87 at about 7 a.m. my husband left home to purchase vegetables.

At about 7.30 a.m. shells were fired by the Indian Peace Keeping Force stationed at Uduvil, towards our village.

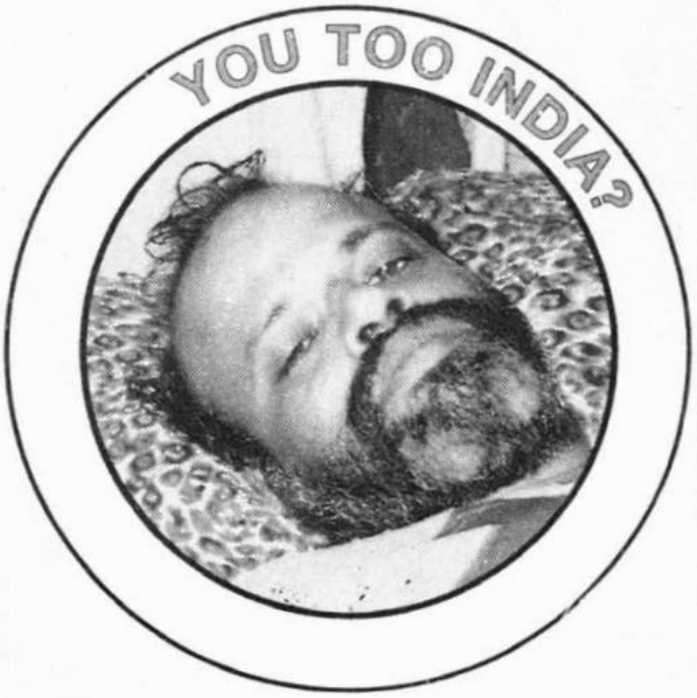
People of our village fled to the Amman Temple closeby and I too sought refuge at the same temple with my children.

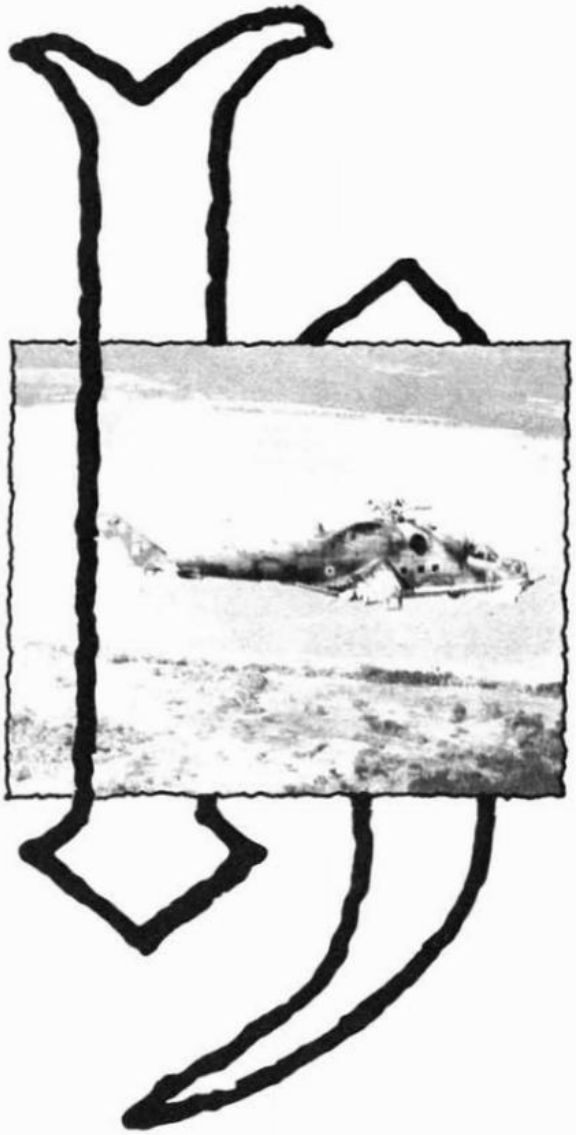
My children and I returned home at 10 a.m. the same day when the shelling ceased.

On finding that my husband had not returned home my nephew and I went out in search of him.

We found the dead body of my husband on the road side near the Pandaterruppu Post Office.

About five dead bodies were found on the road side including that of my husband.


YOU TOO INDIA?



'ஹெலிகொப்டரின்' இரைச்சலில்
அவலக் குரல்கள் அழுக்கப்பட்டன.

காலந் தோறும் இப்படியேதான்
எங்கள் குரல்கள் நசுக்கப்பட்டன
இன்றோ எமது குரல்வளைகளும்.

அரக்கன் விரித்த ஆயிரம் கரங்கள்
திக்குகள் தோறும் முளைக்கத் தொடங்கின
எங்கும் ஒடுக்கும் கரங்களின் இயக்கம்
எங்கள் முதுகின் மேலாய்
அதன் நிழல் இறக்கம்.

எங்கே திடீரென்று அவன் கரம் முளைக்கும்,
எப்போது எங்கள் குரல்வளை நெரியும்
என்பதை அறியோம்.

சந்தியில் சாலையில்
ஒழுங்கையில், முன்றிலில்
எங்கும் முளைக்கலாம்
எங்கள் வீட்டினுள்ளும் முளைக்கலாம்.

துவக்கின் விசைகள் அழுத்தப் படுகையில்
வீடுகள் தோறும் பிணங்கள் விழலாம்
வீதிகள் சுடுகாடாய் மாறலாம்.

.....

கண்ணில் பனித்த கண்ணீர்த் துளிகள்
காலடியில் மண்ணில் சுவற
வானத்தின் அந்தகாரத்தைப் பார்த்து
என்ன நினைவுகளுடன் அவர்
தன்னிரு கை நீட்டினரோ?

அண்ணாந்து நானும் பார்த்தேன்
சூரியனும் என்னைப் பார்த்துச் சொன்னது
நீ ஒரு தமிழனென்று!

I was informed that my husband and others were killed when a mortar shell fell close to them and exploded.

The dead body of my husband was removed and cremated the same evening as curfew was in force.

I have 3 unmarried children two sons and a daughter who are attending school.

Dr. NAGALINGAM THERUGNANA SAMPANTHAN, (71) 32, Palaly Road, Kondavil

My family and I were living in our own house at the above address prior to 14.10.87

Violence erupted in our area on 12.10.87 morning, when shells started falling all arounds us.

I sought refuge at Nallur Kandasamy Temple on 14.10.87 evening along with my family.

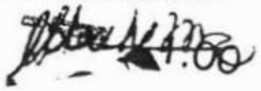
My brother Kandappar Nagalingam Jeyaseelan, aged 68 years who was a retired Divisional Agricultural Extension Officer was living with his wife, son and two domestic aids in his own house 'Easwara Illam', Irupalai Road Kondavil.

On 01.11.87 at about 11.00 am when I was a refugee at 268, Navalar Road, Jaffna a neighbour of my brother came and informed me that my brother, his wife Mrs. J. Rukmani (60) his son J. Gnana Easwaran (23) and the two domestic aids Kanaga Kalarani and Kanaga Wijayaledchumy were found dead with gun shot wounds, in the near portion of 'Easwara Illam'.

Neither myself nor any member of my family could go to the spot, because of the curfew and disturbances in that area.

A few days later, other neighbours of my brother informed me that the remains of the five bodies were cremated in the same compound.

On 16.01.88 we went to 'Easwara Illam' my brother's house and found the house in an untidy condition with most of the familier articles missing. In the compound we found signs of bodies burnt and few pieces of bone left.



SIVAKOLUNTHU ANNAMMAH (53) Navaly South, Manipay.

The deceased person Kandiah Sivakolunthu, aged 56 years was my husband.

He was a retired Post Office employee.

On october 14th 1987 at about 9,00 a.m. my husband left for market in his bicycle.

As he did not return home I went in search of him at various sources including army camps.

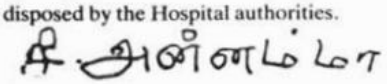
On 1.11.1987 I saw him at the Uduvil army camp.

Thereafter I did not see him.

Few months later I was informed that my husband died at the Jaffna Hospital on 13.11.87.

I learned that he was admitted by the army at the Hospital with gunshot wound on 8.11.87.

I also learned that his body was disposed by the Hospital authorities.



ARUNTHAVAMANI THURAIRAJAH (68) widow, Urumpirai East, Urumpirai.

The deceased DharmalingamThurairajah, aged 68 years was my husband.

He was a Farmer.

On 15.11.87 a shell fell on our house and exploded.

My husband was struck by splinter on his right leg and several parts of his body.

We took treatment from nearby private doctors.

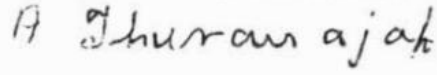
Later we had to leave our house due to military offensive and thereafter sought refuge at the Nallur Murugan Temple along with my injured husband.

We returned to our house and my husband died on 2.12.87.

His body was cremated on 3.12.87 at Urumpirai.

My house was also damaged by the shelling and we lost many of our belongings.

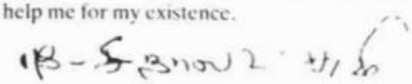
My husband was the sole breadwinner of our family which consisted a son who is a student.



B. SEETHALAKSHMY
Uduvil South, Manipay.
Officer in Charge, Y.M.C.A, Jaffna.

I, Sellathamby widow of Late Nadesa Thambithurai Uduvil South, Manipay beg to put to your kind notice of my pathetic existance.

On the 15th November 1987, my husband Nadesa Thambithurai (labourer), My children and myself were at home, at about 6.30 a.m. the Indian Peace Keeping Force came home on a move towards Suthumalai and started indiscriminate firing at my husband and me. My children ran away owing to fear of life. My husband died at the spot and I was injured and was taken by the IPKF to their Inuvil camp and treated for my injury. Later I went home and with the help of my neighbours, I cremated my husband's dead body in my neighbouring compound. I am helpless and I have no any other source of income for my existence - day to day life. During this incident my house was also burgled. So please consider my sympathetic situation and make some arrangements to help me for my existence.



KASILINGAM THIRAVIAM (50) C/o K. Kasilingam Sivaguru Lane, Kokuvil West, Kokuvil.

The deceased Kanthiah Kasilingam, aged 55 years was my husband.

He was a Cigar-roller.

During the October-November 1987 military offensive we sought refuge at the Iyenar temple, Kokuvil.

On 16.11.87 at about 4.30 p.m. my husband was sent by some one at the temple to purchase some hay for their cow.

On 17.11.87 I was informed that my husband was shot and killed by the army close to the temple on the previous day.

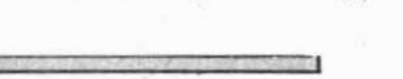
We could not recover the body.

I later learned that it was cremated by the army itself.

Inquest did not take place due to the tension prevailed during the period.

I have six children at home.

After my husband's death we do not have any support if or maintenance.



The Week

REPORT

Deeper into the muddle

Indian policy-makers fumble, Jayewardene scores again

A vice grip? *Jayewardene being received in Delhi*

NOTHING really went right with Indian foreign policy in the first week of November. The biggest embarassment for Rajiv Gandhi and his foreign policy advisers was the continuing impasse in Sri Lanka. India could not have its way on the Lankan accord at the recently-concluded SAARC summit. The three-day visit to New Delhi by Sri Lankan President Junius Jayewardene immediately after the meeting only caused more embarrassment for the Indian government.

What has become increasingly clear is that Jayewardene is out to keep the Indian army in Jaffna as long as possible. Though both Rajiv and Jayewardene inevitably swear by the accord, its only effect so far has been to pit the Indian army against the LTTE guerrillas. And Jayewardene dropped a bombshell of sorts when he suddenly spoke of signing a treaty with India on the lines of the Indo-Soviet treaty or the Indo-Bangladesh one. He made it clear that he would like the IPKF to remain in place till the provincial council elections are over which, he said, he was confident of holding by December-end.

Fortunately, the Indian side managed to put off all talk about a new treaty. Rajiv Gandhi, in fact, said that no proposal for a defence treaty had been put forward by Jayewardene. But even as he left, the Sri Lankan President once again harped on the subject.

But the major source of embarrassment for the Indian side came when Jayewardene openly attacked the Tamil Nadu government and MGR. He blamed the Tamil Nadu leaders for extending training facilities to the militants and giving them funds. He also added that he was only stating facts and that he should not be misunderstood.

> Jayewardene left after achieving his immediate objective of convincing India to extend the IPKF's stay in Jaffna.

But that is precisely the effect that his utterings had. By lavishing praise on Rajiv even as he blamed the Tamil Nadu leaders, Jayewardene apparently sought to give the impression that the Tamil Nadu government was acting independently of New Delhi. More important, it left the Centre in the awkward position of having to explain to their allies, the AIADMK, why it was allowing Jayewardene to attack Chief Minister M.G. Ramachandran from Indian soil.

In the midst of all this, India was trying to push Jayewardene into accelerating the process of devolution of powers. But then the TULF has now raised some objections, particularly with regard to the distribution of subjects between the central list and the concurrent list. Besides devolution, the question of colonisation and return of refugees to the eastern province was also taken up. New Delhi also wanted Colombo act more effectively for resuming normal economic activity in Jaffna and the east. Now that the Elephant Pass line between the north and south has been opened, India would like to see Colombo send more food, fuel and medicines, which the IPKF has been supplying so far.

To all this, the Lankan President gave one vague-sounding assurance: that he would act at the earliest. Apparently, he left after achieving his immediate objective of convincing India to extend the IPKF's stay in Jaffna. He seems to have been worried that India might pull out the troops because of public pressure back home.

In effect, Jayewardene has proved to be too clever for our foreign office mandarins. There was a palpable mood of sulkiness in the ministry of foreign affairs. The foreign policy makers seem to be puzzled and uncertain. What next in Sri Lanka, they seem to ask themselves. No one is really sure what the wily Jayewardene has in store for India.

NOV. 15–21, 1987 —A CORRESPONDENT

Costly campaign

REPORT

FROM OUR SOUTH ASIA CORRESPONDENT

THERE was a chance for peace in Sri Lanka last week. On November 19th the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam handed over 18 Indian soldiers captured in Jaffna in October. The Indians responded by declaring a 48-hour unilateral ceasefire, starting on November 21st.

However, India could not accept the terms that the Tigers demanded to negotiate a timetable for surrendering their arms. They insisted that the Indian peacekeeping force should pull back to the positions it held before the fighting began seven weeks before, and stop its patrolling and search operations. This would have meant handing Jaffna town back to the Tigers. Members of other Tamil organisations, and the Muslims and Sinhalese in the east, would have been left defenceless.

So the Indian force resumed operations on November 23rd. It had already penned many of the most battle-hardened guerrillas into two areas north and north-west of Jaffna. To the north, it has encircled Vadamarachi, the Tigers' political nerve centre. To the north-west, the Tigers' main formations are said to be trapped in two villages, Moolai and Suthumalai.

Their encirclement was completed in the two weeks before the ceasefire, as part of an Indian change of tactics that has apparently paid off. The Indians concentrated on making house-to-house searches to unearth arms caches and keep the guerrillas on the run. These tactics seem to have induced those Tamils who had no love for the Tigers to offer the Indian force more help. A spokesman for the Indian army claimed that in the eight days before the ceasefire the flow of information to the force had sharply increased, enabling it to seize 75,000 rounds of ammunition and large quantities of explosives: enough to cripple the Tigers' bomb-making capacity.

The Indian government now favours a swift campaign because it thinks the Tigers are less interested in making peace than in making propaganda for their cause among their fellow Tamils in India's southern state of Tamil Nadu. The Tigers had insisted on handing over their Indian prisoners in the presence of journalists from Madras, Tamil Nadu's capital.

India hopes to declaw the Tigers by seizing their arms caches rather than by destroying the guerrilla bands themselves. For one thing, there are fears in Delhi that, if the Tigers were wiped out, the Sri Lankan government might be less willing to carry out the India-Sri Lanka agreement under which Tamil areas will be granted a degree of autonomy. For another, the fighting has already cost the Indian army dear.

Privately, Indian defence ministry officials concede that 500 soldiers were killed in northern Sri Lanka (twice the number publicly acknowledged) and almost as many wounded; 25 of the dead were officers. The Tigers' casualties, on the Indian count, have also been high. The Indians have taken 480 prisoners and estimate the number of guerrillas killed at more than 600. But the Tigers are still picking up recruits. The battle for Sri Lanka is far from won.

THE ECONOMIST NOVEMBER 28 1987 ■

LETTER The Hindu, 14.11.87.

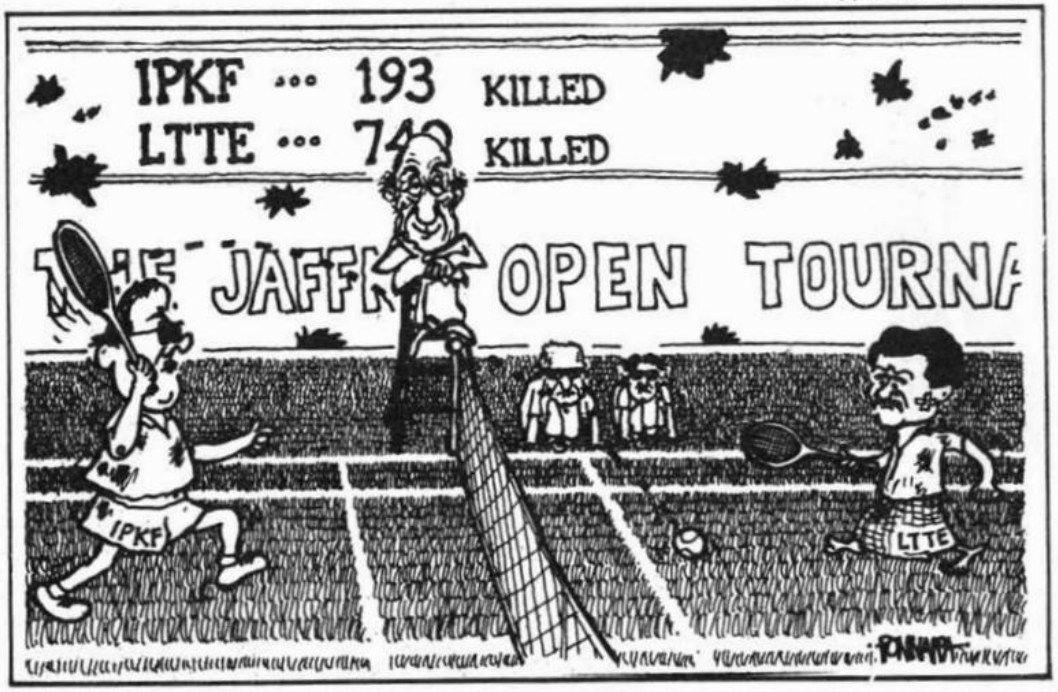
Sir,—It is really painful to observe the fact that the LTTE and the IPKF are still engaged in an unbalanced war with each other. The Indian Government should consider immediately the cease-fire offer made by the LTTE for the reason that it is the LTTE which protected Tamil civilians from State-sponsored atrocities for almost three years. Even if the LTTE does not keep its promise of participating in the peace process after the cease-fire, the consequence on the negative side would be the same for the Indian Government—i.e., our Army can easily overcome the feeble resistance of the LTTE which would not be a difficult task as is evident from the ongoing fight.

However, the positive consequences of the cease-fire, followed by the participation of LTTE in main stream politics would be far more superior than the present state of affairs—it would stop the loss of lives on both sides and also prevent the death of innocent civilians; there is scope for avoidance of guerilla warfare in Northern and Eastern Sri Lanka; and more importantly, it would provide a big relief to the Tamilians in India. In addition, if the LTTE reneges on its words this time, the Sri Lankan Tamils will cease to have any confidence in them.

The second point which we would like to mention is that the Indian Government should have criticised Mr. Jayewardene's recent comments on Tamil Nadu. He had accused the Government of India, on April 28, 1987 of following a "Hitlerian" policy vis-a-vis Sri Lanka and of "helping people to adopt violence against a friendly and democratic country". Now what made him isolate Tamil Nadu in his criticism? It is part of his diabolical game and it is our feeling that our Government should not have allowed the President of a foreign nation to question the integrity of our federation.

G. Chokkalingam and five others, Bangalore

Ponnappa, Deccan Herald



RAPED

5.11.87	Urumpiray	Many women, among them were a two month pregnant lady and an un-attained teen aged girl.
5.11.87	Batticoloa	One girl (14)
6.11.87	Batticoloa	2 girls
7.11.87	Manikollai	6 young girls
15.11.87	Ariyalai/Jaffna	one mother
16.11.87	Kondavil/Jaffna	9 women (2 of them died)
16.11.87	Chunnagam/Jaffna	4 young girls
16.11.87	Jaffna Town Hospital	3 LTTE women cadres
21.11.87	Uduvil	At the Uduvil army camp several women were raped by the IPKF men. Later the parents went to report this to the higher authorities and they were told, "Rape is a very common occurance - Don't come here to complain about it - if a person had been shot dead, ofcourse we are ready to take note of it."

'Tigers' on the run

NEW DELHI, Nov. 19. (UNI) — The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam militants seems to be running out of ammunition and are on the run in Sri Lanka, according to Defence Ministry sources here tonight.

The sources said that yesterday the Indian Peace-Keeping Force seized 19600 rounds of ammunition from LTTE hideouts.

During the week, the IPKF has discovered about 56000 rounds of ammunition.

The fact that the LTTE is running out of ammunition has prompted its leaders to come out in the open and some of them are now asking for negotiations to settle the crisis, the source said.

O.V. Vijayan, News Time, 27.11.87

THE ONLY ROAD TO PEACE

There is no peace today either in the North or the South. The Jayewardenes and the Amirthalingams must bear the responsibility for this situation. The people in the North are, in addition, subject to the military terror of a foreign army. After signing the secret pact with Gandhi, the Jayewardene-Dissanayake fascist clique is acting to repress the people's opposition by murderous assaults on patriots.....The violence of the patriots is only a reaction to the State-sponsored fascist violence of the Jayewardene-Dissanayake clique.

The monopoly in violence that the Jayewardene regime enjoyed is now at an end. Being frightened, they are now escalating violence against the people. This will bring them to their inevitable end. All those who talk about peace must understand one thing: peace can be obtained only by chasing away the illegitimate, treasonous, fascist clique of Jayewardene-Dissanayake-Thondaman.

★ In order to bring peace to Sri Lanka, the traitor Jayewardene, an avatar of Hitler, must be removed from power.

★ In order to bring peace to Sri Lanka, the stooges of Jayewardene — Dissanayake, Ranil Wickremasinghe, Ananda Tissa de Alwis and all other traitors — must be thrown out.

★ The Indian aggressor forces must be sent out of Sri Lanka.

★ The Secret Jayewardene-Gandhi Pact must be totally rejected.

★ The Provincial Councils legislation, which is a betrayal of the rights of the majority of the people and which actually increases inequality, must be repealed.

★ The anti-democratic legislation must be repealed.

★ Eelamist terrorism must be de feated.

★ The State terrorism of the Jayewardene clique must be ended.

★ All foreign intervention in the affairs of Sri Lanka, including that of India, must be ended.

★ The territorial integrity of Sri Lanka, the sovereignty of its people and full democracy must be reaffirmed and restored.

We do not want today a provincial council election. What the country requires is a general election and a presidential election. Therefore, all opposition parties must boycott the provincial council elections, and agitate and struggle for general elections. In order to achieve the objectives mentioned, the opposition forces must ask the people for a two-thirds majority power in Parliament. We are confident that a united opposition can win this power. All patriots, all true opponent parties, all groups must realise this.

Central Committee of the
JANATA VIMUKTI
PERAMUNA

November 18, 1987

Ravi Shankar, Indian Express, 16.11.87.

LTTE NEWS 'blamed'

From Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, Nov. 12.

An External Affairs Ministry spokesman today said that the LTTE must be 'squarely blamed' for the inconveniences and problems being faced by the population of Jaffna town and the peninsula. He said the absence of electric supply to the urban centres was caused by the 'extensive and deliberate' damage of power stations by the LTTE.

The bulk of the power needs of the Jaffna peninsula and the town was met by power stations in the south. With the disruption of long-distance power lines by the JVP and the LTTE this source has been rendered inoperative.

A clerk working for the LTTE has revealed that it used to extort Rs. 20 lakhs every month from liquor shops and bars in the Jaffna area. It was because of the drying up of such sources following the IPKF operations that the LTTE resorted to acts of looting and extortion in the Batticaloa and Vavuniya areas.

The spokesman said reports indicated that the inhabitants of Batticaloa and Velvettithurai were denying food supplies to the LTTE. They were also preventing them from laying land mines.

The Indian Peace Keeping Force after wresting from the LTTE its bastion of Jaffna city fanned out to other areas of the peninsula. Picture shows a group of IPKF men on the move.

LTTE releases all 18 Indian soldiers

NEWS

COLOMBO, Nov. 19. (UNI & PTI)

ALL the 18 Indian Peace-Keeping Force (IPKF) soldiers held captive by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam were released tonight at Chavakacheri in the northern Jaffna Peninsula.

Nine of the soldiers were released by the LTTE in the evening, which was followed by an announcement that the remaining would be handed over to the IPKF later.

A Defence Ministry spokesman in New Delhi confirmed that all the 18 soldiers had been released.

The first of the nine soldiers were brought to Chavakacheri, 16 km east of Jaffna, and handed over to the Commander of the IPKF formation there in the presence of a team of Indian journalists.

LTTE Deputy Leader G. Mahendrarajah alias Mahathiya and another leader Shankar arrived at Chavakacheri earlier to supervise the handing over. The soldiers have been in LTTE custody since the second week of October.

Indian High Commissioner J. N. Dixit called on Sri Lankan Prime Minister R. Premadasa this evening and apprised him of the latest developments in Sri Lanka's north and east, where the IPKF is engaged in disarming Tamil guerillas.

Mr. Dixit told UNI later that he told Mr. Premadasa that his continuing support for the devolution of powers to the provinces within the framework of the Indo-Sri Lankan agreement was important for the stability and peace in the island nation and also for improving regional co-operation.

Resistance waning

The Indian envoy was calling on Mr. Pramadasa, a staunch critic of India, for the first time in 16 months.

The organised armed resistance by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam is now on the wane and no armed action against the IPKF has been lately undertaken by them, an official spokesman said in New Delhi today.

The militant cadres seem to be disillusioned by their so-called armed struggle because two LTTE militants surrendered to IPKF at Nallur temple, he said.

R.K. Lakshman, Times of India, 10.11.87.

Frontline

End of Captivity

November 28-December 11, 1987

The release took place at Chavakacheri in the Jaffna peninsula on November 19 in two batches of nine. The residential locality around the District Court building was eerily silent with no sign of life. In a surprise move, 31-year old Mahatiya himself turned up to hand over the jawans to the IPKF. They were received by the tall and imposing Brig. J. S. Dhillon. (The expectation was that the chief of LTTE's political wing, Yogi, would release the men. There were also reports that Mahatiya had been injured).

The brief and simple handing over ceremony took place around 5.45 p.m. as dusk was falling. Mediapersons had been flown in from Palaly in the Jaffna peninsula in two helicopters. IPKF soldiers, with their sten-guns on the ready, ringed the make-shift helipad.

Around 5.30 p.m., Mahatiya, accompanied by Shankar and Bharatan, two other LTTE functionaries, arrived in a van flying a white flag and also the red LTTE flag with the Tiger emblem. He was introduced to Brig. Dhillon and others. One of the reporters appealed to Mahatiya and Brig. Dhillon to shake hands and the two obliged, when flashbulbs winked. Then, as if from nowhere, the first batch of nine captive soldiers emerged from across the playfield. Dressed in lungis and shirts, they looked happy though a bit wan. They lined up for a few moments for photographs.

Shankar later told reporters that while Gura Singh of the 13th Sikh Light Infantry was captured on the Jaffna University campus on October 11, the 17 others of the eighth battalion of the Mahar Regiment were surrounded at Chittankerni near Vaddukoddai in the peninsula on October 16. Brig. Dhillon said the Indian soldiers "ran short of ammunition in the fight and were surrounded. They had no choice."

He explained that "the original plan was to release nine prisoners at Udduvil at 11 a.m. and another nine at Chavakacheri around 1.30 p.m. It is their (LTTE's) request that they wanted to hand over our soldiers to us. They contacted us on the radio. We gave freedom of movement for their vehicles to collect the soldiers. We escorted them up to a point and then they left on their own."

A short interview with Mahatiya followed the freeing of the soldiers. "We are keen that a ceasefire should be effected first," he declared. "The Government of India should take into consideration the goodwill shown by the LTTE in releasing them and order a ceasefire, and the Tamils' problems should be solved." He listed a series of conditions for the LTTE to lay down arms: "A ceasefire should be announced first. The attacks on the Tamil people should be stopped. The ban on the LTTE should be lifted. General amnesty should be granted to our leader V. Prabakaran. The IPKF should return to the pre-October 10 position. Later, when the situation becomes secure for our people, we will hand over the weapons after discussions."

Mahatiya alleged that "2,000 innocent Tamil civilians were killed" in the IPKF operations and four lakhs had become refugees. "All news about problems here have been blacked out in India and to the world. A mischievous propaganda has been unleashed against us that we tortured Indian prisoners and burnt them. It is not true. Ask them whether we tortured them. We did not lay conditions for their release. We look upon them as friends. We wanted to meet you because we wanted to express the truth to the world," he claimed.

The release of the second batch took place at the same venue around 6.30 p.m. The jawans were handed over by Shankar this time.

★ ★ ★

But the process of handing over was not without any hitch. The reporters who arrived at Palaly in the morning had first been taken in two helicopters to Udduvil where the first part of the release was originally scheduled to take place. The eight-minute hop revealed the scenic beauty of the peninsula, but no movement of people was visible down below despite a relaxation of the curfew between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. Even at Udduvil, where the helicopters landed in a paddy field near a rice mill, the scheduled venue of the release, there was absolute silence.

Soon a van pulled up in front of the mill and Mahatiya stepped out, accompanied by Shankar, Bharatan and three bodyguards, with AK-47 assault rifles.

The atmosphere between the LTTE representatives and the IPKF officers seemed cordial enough. Mahatiya had a long chat with Raheem of the LTTE who had been flown in with the journalists from Madras where he was under "house-arrest." After discussions between Mahatiya and the IPKF officers it was announced that the soldiers would be released at Chavakacheri in the evening. The original plan was to release nine of them at Udduvil and the rest at Chavakacheri. The change in the programme was necessitated because the vehicle bringing Mahatiya could not meet the van bringing the nine soldiers owing to a "communication gap."

As the journalists flew back to Palaly before going to Chavakacheri, they saw the first evidence of life on one of the roads below — three men riding cycles and also cattle running, scared by the noise of the rotors.

★ ★ ★

The IPKF officials had told the reporters that it would not be possible to interview the released jawans. While Mahatiya urged them to ask the freed men whether the LTTE tortured them, Sepoy Waman Chite just managed to say in Hindi that they were treated well and were all right. Immediately, all the nine men were taken away and flown to Palaly in a waiting helicopter.

After Mahatiya spoke to the press, he distributed photographs to some presspersons. IPKF officers tried to snatch away the photographs, but the journalists managed to retrieve them.

However, after the reporters returned to Palaly around 6.15 p.m. and a two-hour wait there, a top officer of the IPKF insisted that the photographs be handed over to him. He argued that since the presspersons had come as "guests" of the IPKF and had been allowed to bring their own cameras, they should not take the LTTE photographs. He warned that if the journalists did not return the photographs they would be frisked. An officer of the Press Information Bureau in Madras threatened the reporters that they would be "blacklisted" if photographs were recovered from them and not allowed to come on any more press tours. Finally the reporters gave up. They started the return journey from Palaly as late as 11.15 p.m. because of a "snag" in the aircraft and reached Madras around 1 a.m. T. S. Subramanian

Ceasefire ends, IPKF resumes operations

From K. K. Katyal

NEW DELHI, Nov. 23.

The ceasefire in Sri Lanka is off. The Indian Peace Keeping Force resumed its operations to recover arms and ammunition in Jaffna peninsula and other areas on the expiry of the 48-hour suspension of operations this morning.

The Government took this decision because the LTTE did not reciprocate the gesture and, instead, set unacceptable preconditions even for considering the surrender of arms. They thus belied the expectations of well-meaning persons in Jaffna and Tamil Nadu that the militants would utilise the respite provided by the ceasefire for a realistic reappraisal of the military and political situation, and agree to join the processes envisaged in the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement.

While announcing the official decision on Friday ceasing operations for 48 hours, the Minister of State for External Affairs, Mr. Natwar Singh, spoke of the Government's willingness to extend the ceasefire in case there were positive moves by the LTTE and of that there was no evidence. Even during this period, the Government became painfully aware of the rigidity in the attitude of the militants, but confined itself to an expression of regret. However, negative pointers continued, leaving it with no option but to resume the operations — which, as immediately before the ceasefire, were in the nature of searches and seizure of arms and ammunition, held by the militants in violation of the Agreement.

Intimidatory acts

The Government was surprised by the tone and the contents of the letter sent by the LTTE deputy leader Mr. Mahatiya, requiring the IPKF to return to the positions held by it prior to October 10, when the operations began. Secondly, as the External Affairs Ministry spokesman said today while announcing the Government's decision to resume operations, there were instances of the LTTE cadres threatening to kill persons who assisted the Peace Keeping Force and putting up posters calling for stoppage of functioning by the Indian Red Cross and closure of Government offices and banks. The acts of intimidation claimed two lives, it was stated.

All this was just the opposite of the two basic requirements repeatedly indicated by the Government — that the militants hand over their arms and unequivocally support the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement. A positive response would have led the LTTE to join the mainstream of political life and play an important role in the future democratic set-up, to use Mr. Natwar Singh's words.

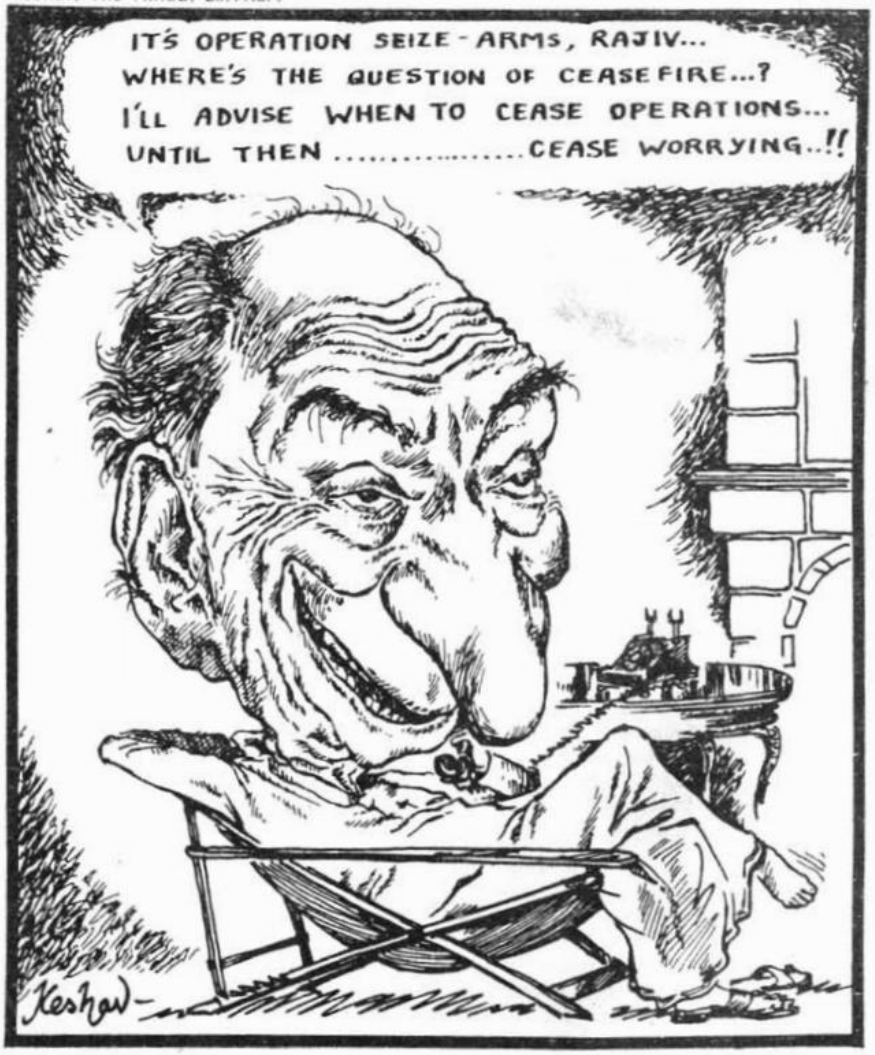
The Government felt vindicated that it had announced the ceasefire unilaterally and not as a formalised arrangement based on inadequate indications from the LTTE of its willingness to play its part of the game. The onus had now shifted to those like the former Jaffna Municipal Commissioner, Mr. V. Sivagnanam, who were confident that a ceasefire for 48 to 72 hours would be utilised by the LTTE for laying down arms.

The reports that the LTTE leader, Mr. V. Prabakaran, planned to come to India for talks were officially discounted. The Government's position, as reiterated today was that there was "no question of discussions with the LTTE on terms other than those announced by Mr. Natwar Singh."

The following is the text of the statement by the spokesman on the Government's decision to resume operations: "On November 20, Mr. Natwar Singh said in Parliament that the Government has decided that for 48 hours starting with 7 a.m. on Saturday, the IPKF will not open fire on its own initiative. Mr. Natwar Singh expressed the hope that the LTTE would use this opportunity to hand over arms and unequivocally support the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement in the larger interests of the Tamils in Sri Lanka and do so during the period of 48 hours.

We deeply regret that after Mr. Natwar Singh's announcement, the LTTE did not respond positively and is now insisting on a number of unacceptable preconditions prior to its considering the question of its laying down arms. Also in the period after Mr. Natwar Singh's announcement, there have been a number of incidents where the LTTE threatened to kill citizens assisting IPKF and put posters at various places saying that the Indian Red Cross should stop functioning and Government offices and banks should not open. There have also been incidents at Navatkuli village and in Jaffna where citizens were killed by the LTTE to intimidate the population and to force them to refuse cooperation and support to the IPKF.

In the absence of any positive response by the LTTE to our offer and because of the threats posed to the safety, security and well-being of the people of Northern and Eastern Provinces and the continued possession of arms by the LTTE in violation of the provisions of the Indo-Sri Lankan Agreement, the IPKF operations to recover arms and ammunition have been resumed on the expiry of the 48-hour period.


IT'S OPERATION SEIZE-ARMS, RAJIV...
WHERE'S THE QUESTION OF CEASEFIRE...?
I'LL ADVISE WHEN TO CEASE OPERATIONS...
UNTIL THEN .....CEASE WORRYING..!!
Keshav

Keshav, The Hindu, 20.11.87.

REPORT

NORTH BECOMES A SUB-PLOT

Drama shifts to South Lanka

From MERVYN de SILVA in Colombo

TWENTY-SEVEN "Tigers" are killed by the IPKF. Six Tigers a few days later. More the next day. Many towns in the East and outside the peninsula are under curfew, continuously for three days in some cases. Another Indian troop ship arrives. Nobody can enter or leave the peninsula without an IPKF **laissez passer,** it is announced.

In Colombo, such news still makes the front page, but it is a big yawn. Outside the city, hardly anybody cares, unless some Sinhalese settlers or fishermen or Muslims are killed. The "war" and "mopping up" in the North are becoming a closed chapter in the average Sinhala mind, and this is increasingly true even of the Sri Lankan political establishment. The "North" is a Tamil problem, and an Indian affair.

The isolation of the North psychologically is no tacit acquiescence in permanent "separation." It is a by-product of a new preoccupation with the mounting crisis in the South. In a way, the Tamil conflict, once an all-encompassing concern, is now a sub-plot of the drama which opened in Parliament last week.

HOLLOW WIN

On Thursday, the Provincial Councils Bill and the thirteenth amendment to the Constitution were passed by a crushing 136 to 11 majority. It was a personal triumph for President Jayewardene, but a hollow victory for his party. Speaking to the Chamber of Commerce, in October, Mr. Jayewardene had boasted "my party will vote **en bloc,** make no mistake." The confident prediction came in the wake of quite credible reports that Prime Minister Premadasa, an outspoken critic of the accord and of Indian policy in particular, controlled a parliamentary caucus that would frustrate the President's plans.

It was highly unlikely, though, that Mr. Premadasa would dare to take the enormous risks involved in such a confrontation. Opposition hopes were sufficiently buoyed, however, by his public attacks on devolution, merger and Indian initiatives, that the number of prospective defectors rose each week.

In fact, just 30 members from the United National Party's 140 MPs could have caused a debacle by merely abstaining, since the Bill required 113 votes, a two-thirds majority. As it happened, the Government suffered a few moral defeats, but 136 MPs, including the PM, stood solidly behind the President.

SUSPENDED

Two UNP MPs abstained on the second reading, but were quickly back in line for the third reading. Mr. Cyril Mathew, the former Industries Minister, a virulent Sinhala-Buddhist champion who was dismissed from the cabinet last year, voted "no." He was suspended from the party the next day.

The real blow to UNP prestige was delivered by Agriculture Minister Gamini Jayasuriya, a party veteran and former General Secretary. His unchallenged reputation as "Mister Clean", a nearly extinct species in the present political environment, made his resignation from the cabinet, party and seat a bruising blow.

The overwhelming majority reaffirmed the authority of the Presidency, and Mr. Jayewardene's total command over his party, but the three-day exercise also exposed to public gaze the illusion of numbers. At the end of the day, the massive vote could not conceal the fact of a disunited and enbattled cabinet and party. The opposition's meagre 11 were high-spirited and aggressive, while the 138 were dispirited and defensive.

Using all his linguistic and oratorical gifts, Prime Minister Premadasa suppressed his chagrin at having to vote for the Bills by savaging his own ministerial colleagues to the delirious delight of the opposition. His victims were the top front-benchers, Lands Minister Gamini Dissanayake, Finance Minister Ronnie de Mel and National Security Minister Lalith Athulathmudali. On occasion, he found himself in total agreement with Opposition leader Anura Bandaranaike or complimenting him. The provocation for this extraordinary outburst was most revealing.

Poverty and unemployment, Mr. Premadasa argued, were the breeding ground of youth unrest and violence. He had appealed for the removal of the ban on the JVP to the President, to the cabinet and the government Parliamentary group. To no avail, he lamented, scoffing at those "pundits" who thought that the World Bank was a treasure-house of wisdom, and those others who placed "security" above everything, without having the foggiest notion of the socia-economic roots of political violence. Poverty and economic disaffection are the root causes of "terrorism," argued the Premier.

The shadow of the JVP which had fallen darkly and dramatically over Parliament on August 18, when President Jayewardene and the Premier had escaped death narrowly and two Ministers were seriously wounded in a grenade attack, was now proving to be a long, menacing spectre. The public galleries were closed and TV coverage of the proceedings prohibited by the Speaker. Both for security reasons.

A far more striking image of a besieged regime was a daily tableau. Each morning, a heavily guarded convoy of tourist buses drove from the Hotel Lanka Oberoi to the Parliament House four miles away. Their precious human cargo consisted of UNP MPs, including ministers and their deputies. Armoured personnel carriers led the way, helicopters hovered protectively overhead. All these precautions for a party that had a five-sixths majority in Parliament.

RESIGNING

If the party voted **en bloc,** members of the UNP-controlled JSS, the trade union, and elected UNP men in local councils were resigning **en masse** and having their decision reported in the papers. UNP affiliated student unions in several of the southern campuses were disbanding themselves. All were

responding to death threats from the JVP or allied organisations. At least 61 UNP activists and another 20 village officials, policemen and suspected informers had been killed.

A bomb blast in the heart of the city at rush hour on the day before the debate, whoever the perpetrators, ("Tigers" or JVP) created the ideal atmospherics before the curtain rose. Thirty-one died, over a hundred were wounded.

The JVP denied complicity in the city terrorist attack and the evidence points to the LTTE. Yet the JVP was soon to demonstrate it was not altogether averse to carnage and mayhem. As the debate began, two trains were derailed, one South of Colombo and the other near Kandy, in Central Hills. Only luck prevented a disaster.

REAL SUPPORT

Student strikes and protest fasts, and sabotage in the South which plunged many districts into total darkness, indicated the JVP's real support bases — the campuses and high school students, and the deep South, with a fairly wide swathe of the discontented lower-middle class. It has one major advantage in the political climate, and this advantage may magnify its actual popularity. Anti-government feelings are high over grievances accumulated in the ten-year rule of a party that has clearly overstayed its welcome. These passions have found in the "peace accord" a perfect rallying point, especially for the Sinhala Buddhist majority. A tactically smart JVP has become its militant voice and instrument.

Already another phenomenon has darkened the political scene, with ominous possibilities. A counter-terror has been launched. While each MP has been assigned 200 armed "home guards," vigilantes are hunting down suspected "subversives and saboteurs." The Opposition calls them "Kola Kotiyo" (green tigers) or "green guards," green being the UNP colour.

Breaking her long silence on these trends, Mrs. Bandaranaike released a signed article to the Sunday press. She warned that this new "creed and practice of political violence" was a threat not only to the regime but to social stability and democracy. The postponement of elections, authoritarian rule, "State terrorism," youth unemployment and inflation, the all-pervasive "stench of corruption" and the "hypocrisy" of the rulers, she said, had spawned widespread youth unrest. The Government's response would only help repeat in the South, the tragedy which had been enacted in the North. 21.11.87

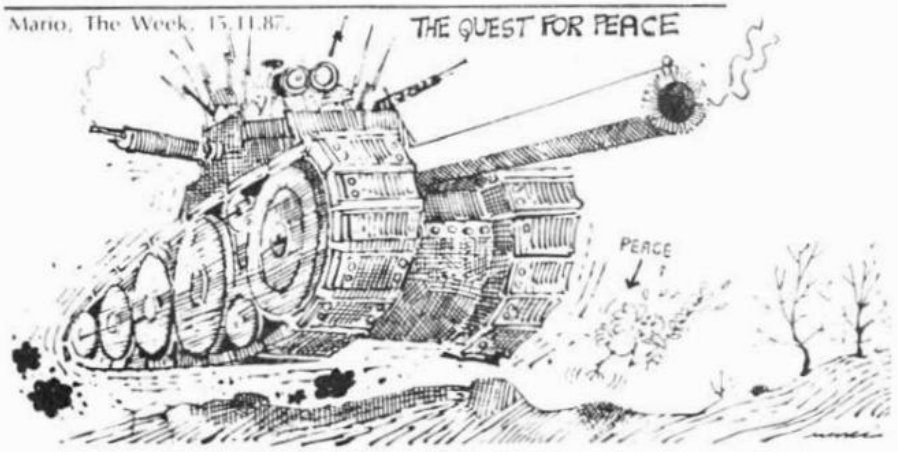
EDITORIAL

21.11.87

Truce in Sri Lanka

THE 48-HOUR cease-fire announced by the Indian Peace-Keeping Force in Sri Lanka will be widely welcomed. The decision of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam to release the eighteen Indian soldiers in its custody might have lost much of its goodwill value as a result of repeated postponement of its implementation. What little was left was perhaps destroyed by the fresh acts of violence in the Northern and Eastern provinces after their release on Thursday. Even so, a matching response from the Indian side was called for. The attempts to belittle the LTTE gesture as a step forced on it by its immense field losses were, in any event, not very convincing. The fact is that, long after the Indian troops took control of Jaffna peninsula, the LTTE was able to retain the prisoners in its custody. The safety of the prisoners could not have been a major consideration for the militant cadres who attach so little value even to their own lives and those of their supporters. It is evident that without a wide measure of support and co-operation from the local population the LTTE could not have held on to its catch. Since, according to the Indian military and Government spokesmen, the LTTE men had run out of ammunition and the IPKF had not found it necessary to undertake any armed action against them lately, there was no valid reason for refusing to order a cease-fire, as demanded by various political parties in this country who have been alarmed by the turn of events in the island.

Hopefully, the latest developments will pave the way for speedy implementation of the Indo-Sri Lankan accord. While the guns remain silent, efforts should be made to persuade the LTTE to part with the arms still in its possession and participate in the political process. Simultaneously, President J.R. Jayewardene should be nudged into reviving the proposal to set up an interim administrative council for the Northern and Eastern provinces with adequate representation for the LTTE. This is necessary to ensure that provincial elections can take place by the year-end as envisaged in the accord.



The Week

REPORT

The war goes on

New Delhi caught between MGR and Premadasa

IT's a classic no-win situation. The Indian Peace Keeping Force's attempts to bring the LTTE fighters to heel have been thwarted. The Tigers, in the face of a full-scale assault, have beaten a well-planned retreat. The tactic is to get away from the firing line, regroup and fight a guerrilla war.

Back home, in Delhi, the policy-makers are running out of time and idea. In a desperate move, they roped in Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.G. Ramachandran to play the mediator. It took a lot of persuading by Union Minister of State for External Affairs Natwar Singh and external affairs ministry spokesman G. Parthasarathy to bring MGR around. But then, even MGR, the LTTE's godfather all this while, could do little.

The Tigers are no longer willing to trust him explicitly. They would rather keep their options open, now that the DMK has consented to playing their benefactor. The stand-off continues, the Tigers unwilling to accede to India's terms and India refusing to declare a unilateral ceasefire.

Sudhir Dar, The Hindustan Times, 20.11.87.

"Don't believe it, my friend... India's selling arms labelled 'Made in Pakistan'!"

Every extension of the IPKF's stay in Jaffna is fraught with grave consequences. Apart from the mounting criticism from the opposition parties, the Centre has to guard against the growing public resentment in Tamil Nadu. The DMK has let it known that it would take the battle to the streets, but even more alarming is the trenchant criticism of India's action by AIADMK leaders in both houses of Parliament.

The Tigers, though virtually cornered, seem to be holding out in the hope that domestic developments would force Delhi to halt the operations if not call them off altogether. Already, India has made a come-down from its earlier rigid stand. Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi has said that a ceasefire would be effected in 30 minutes if LTTE asks for it.

Even that failed to mollify the Tigers. Rather, as Natwar Singh stated in the Rajya Sabha, "the attitude of the Tigers and the leadership has altered so drastically in the last few weeks that we have landed in this situation."

They may have been encouraged by the fact that MGR asked Delhi to effect a ceasefire in response to such a plea from a prominent Jaffnaite, C.V.K. Sivagnanam. This was followed by an appeal from LTTE for a 48-hour ceasefire to enable its leaders to discuss India's terms. Though the request was routed through MGR, Delhi failed to respond.

The Tamil Nadu chief minister sulked for the next few days, refusing either to endorse India's action or to support LTTE. As if on cue, AIADMK MPs went on the offensive. Aladi Aruna was most bitter in his comments: "You cannot implement the accord at gunpoint. If the Centre does not know how to persuade LTTE, leave the matter to our chief minister MGR." The AIADMK members had another reason to be agitated: Sri Lankan President J.R. Jayewardene's criticial references to MGR in Delhi. The onslaught from the MPs prompted the Prime Minister to assure Parliament hurriedly that "there were no differences between the attitude of our government and the attitude of MGR". It was only on November 11 that MGR issued a statement, expressing "continued support to the Central government to find a permanent solution to the ethnic problem." He also clarified that the views of party MP Aladi Aruna "do not reflect the views of the party".

MGR's crucial endorsement came in the wake of the DMK's calls to its members to "prepare to sacrifice themselves in the party's future campaign." Significantly, LTTE's man in Madras, Kittu, had two meetings with MGR before the latter issued his official statement.

Meanwhile, the moderate TULF criticised the Tigers for taking a tough stand. Said a TULF leader in Madras: "It is the people who are at the receiving end again. They want peace but the ball lies in the Tigers' court. India has gone the farthest in its offer. The Tigers are sticking to their guns. They are to blame." Other Tamil militant groups are unaware of the Tigers' plan of action. "They are running out of ammunition since the sea blockade has been tight," said an EPRLF member.

However, news trickling in from southern Tamil Nadu indicates that the Tigers still undertake the risky boat ride across the Palk Strait by a circuitous route, starting off from the Thanjavur coastline. A source told THE WEEK that the Tigers were purchasing arms from some militants who are idling there. But sources in Rameswaram said that the patrolling along the south coast was so intense that even local fishermen had not been able to go out to sea at night. Intelligence agencies, fearing that the Tigers might use fishing as a ruse to get in and out of Tamil Nadu, are keeping a close watch.

Evidently, the Tigers are prepared for a long-drawn out conflict, despite the heavy casualties they have suffered. The IPKF, just as it is consolidating its hold over Jaffna, may now be requisitioned to tackle the violence unleashed by Sinhala extremists in southern Sri Lanka; more troops were sent to the island in the second week of November.

As the face-off continues on the battlefield, plans to restore the administrative process on the Jaffna peninsula have been disrupted. The TULF has made a strong plea for setting the administrative process in motion. "We can have a non-political set-up so that the problem of power-sharing among the groups and parties does not arise again," said one TULF leader. "So what if the Tigers don't come forward for a ceasefire? There will be violence here and there, but that is also happening in the south. It is the people who want life to get moving.

For the policy-makers in Delhi, the immediate worry is whether they can save the Indo-Sri Lankan accord at all. Sceptics already are saying that this too will go the way of the other accords the

Rajiv government rushed through in the last three years. It has then become a prestige issue for Delhi; the accord has to be saved at all costs, even if it meant a bloodbath in Jaffna.

President Jayewardene, wily as ever, was hardly of any help. He refused to incorporate the provisions of the accord in the two bills relating to the devolution of powers. Citing domestic opposition, he pushed the bills through without incorporating the changes.

He added to Delhi's problems by his intemperate remarks while on a working visit to the national capital. He accused the Tamil Nadu chief minister of encouraging terrorism and said that Velupillai Prabhakaran, LTTE supremo would be treated like a criminal once captured. Later, at Rajiv's prodding, he tried to explain his stand. Said Jeyewardene: "I hope my remarks about Tamil Nadu were not misunderstood. But it is a fact that some people in Tamil Nadu have trained, have provided the Sri Lankan terrorists with arms, money and taken them as best friends. Somebody asked whether Prabhakaran would be treated like a criminal. He has confirmed that he has murdered the Tamil mayor of Jaffna because he belonged to the political party of Mrs Bandaranayike. We searched for him—at that time I was in the opposition, Mrs Bandaranayike's government did. He ran off to India. Maybe at that time the extradition laws did not permit him to be sent away. We are trying to change them under the SAARC convention. But I understand that you will send him over here till the laws are changed.

"I think Rajiv Gandhi tried to send some people but they went to the court and that was abandoned. But I would ask you how if the murderers of Indira Gandhi came to Sri Lanka and I entertained them as my friends, used them to start a private army on my behalf, looked after them and collected crores of rupees and gave them to carry on their movement, what you gentlemen through your press and through other media would say? What you would say I have said. That is all. Examine your mind and see whether what I am saying is not correct.

"Fortunately, Rajiv Gandhi and I have agreed that terrorism in Sri Lanka was assuming a shape and form that could have possibly broken up the stability of Sri Lanka and also changed the regional security of this region. He has realised it, I have realised it. And we are working together. There may be differences of opinion, disagreement about approach, but the basic goal is that Sri Lanka should continue to be independent, should continue to be a unitary state, should be free of violence against a democratically elected government, which is his dearest wish for India too. So we can get on. And I hope the leaders in Tamil Nadu will follow his example."

Whether he was making public what he and Rajiv agreed in private, the blunt talk embarrassed Delhi no end. All attention then on was on persuading Jayewardene to withdraw his remarks. Rajiv Gandhi and Natwar Singh met the grand old man of Sri Lanka to explain the constructive role played by M.G. Ramachandran throughout the Lankan crisis. Rajiv reminded Jayewardene that in fact it was he who created problems for MGR by forcing the exodus of 1,30,000 refugees into Tamil Nadu. It was also pointed out that his remarks on Prabhakaran would have an adverse reaction among Tamils in India and affect all plans for a settlement.

Jayewardene readily agreed to make amends. While he withdrew his remarks on Prabhakaran and said that he would be given amnesty if the accord terms were accepted by him, in the case of MGR he just said that his remarks were about the pre-accord days.

When it came to the question of withdrawing the Indian forces, Jayewardene insisted that India should first complete its task of disarming the Tamil militants.

Meanwhile, Jayewardene's utterances on MGR were having their reaction. Curt messages were conveyed over the phone from Madras to New Delhi. Rajiv Gandhi could ill-afford to alienate the Tamil Nadu chief minister. He immediately despatched Natwar Singh and G. Parthasarathy, the able official spokesman for the ministry of external affairs, to Madras. The duo successfully assuaged the wounded feelings of MGR.

But there were other reports from Tamil Nadu that were worrying Delhi. Public opinion was turning and people were questioning the wisdom of the accord itself. What is more, the reports of IPKF operations too were having their impact. Very few could understand the logic behind India's changed role from protector to hunter of Tamils in Sri Lanka. There were indications that Karunanidhi was slowly gaining politically. Rajiv immediately asked G.K. Moopanar to remain in Madras and mobilise public opinion in favour of the accord and to explain the difficulties to partymen.

However, what rattled the Central government was the concerted attack in Parliament. Both AIADMK and DMK demanded immediate ceasefire. That

Ramamoorthy, Deccan Herald, 11.11.87.

FIERCE FIGHTING BETWEEN IPKF AND TAMIL TIGERS
SRI LANKA DEFENCE SERVICES CLUB
"Stop complaining about India... relax, enjoy the rest!"

Sudhir Dar, The Hindustan Times, 18.11.87.

CIVILIANS □ KILLED (Operation Pawan)

Sethumadava Iyer 12.11.87

N. Sivaguru 12.11.87

V. Iyadurai 13.11.87

V. Natarasa Lingam 13.11.87

G. Thavamani 13.11.87

S.S. Kanakendran 14.11.87

S. Rajamma 14.11.87

V. Anyalingam 15.11.87

N. Chellah 15.11.87

N. Rajakumar 18.11.87

Shanmugasundram 19.11.87

T. Sivanathan 19.11.87

Sudhamathi 19.11.87

S. Udayakumar 19.11.87

S. Rajadurai 20.11.87

M. Kadirvelu 21.11.87

P. Vijayaraja 26.11.87

Mrs. Pushpadevi 28.11.87

was the first time AIADMK took a different stand on the Sri Lankan issue from that of the Congress(I).

Members from the opposition had many questions to ask. What was the idea of signing an accord in which LTTE is not a party? Why should India send its troops to kill Tamilians who all along stood with India? The most ominous statement came from V. Gopalaswamy, the irrepressible DMK member of the Rajya Sabha. He said: "Sir, if you want to protect the unity and integrity of Sri Lanka at the cost of the lives of Tamils, then the unity and integrity of this country will be in jeopardy. You are sowing the seeds of disintegration in the minds of Tamils. I warn you."

Outside too criticism was mounting. Said A.P. Venkateswaran, former foreign secretary: "It is a hastily concluded accord, which has very little safeguards of implementation, where we have put the cart before the horse." He added that India should have first settled the issue of devolution of powers but India went by the assurances of Jayewardene, though Jayewardene was known to go back on his words. "The accord is a Himalayan blunder, not behoving the maturity of an intelligent people like the Indians."

Back in Colombo, the Sinhala hawks were on the offensive as Parliament convened to pass the bills on devolution of powers. First, Agriculture Minister Gamini Jayesuriya quit. Then came an outburst against India by Prime Minister Premadasa. He accused the IPKF of genocide in Jaffna and said: "We know who made our children militants so bold. It is our neighbour who is responsible for the disobedience of our children. The children who had run off to their uncle complaining against their father were now saying that the father was far better than their uncle."

Despite the many obstacles in its path, New Delhi would not give up hope. Towards the second week of November Indian officials were contacting LTTE leaders individually for negotiating a laying down of arms. This was facilitated by the active role played by MGR. The idea is to isolate Velupillai Prabhakaran if necessary and persuade others to cooperate with India. The South Block mandarins believe that once the elections to the provincial councils are over, the temptation to share power will make many in LTTE to come around. However, the fact remains that the majority of Tamils and Sinhalese, for whom the accord was signed, are still opposed to it.

—K. GOPALAKRISHNAN and VINCENT D'SOUZA

No talks before arms surrender, says Natwar Singh

REPORT

From K. K. Katyal

NEW DELHI, Nov 24.

Dismayed by the lack of any positive response from the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) to the ceasefire, the Government of India today ruled out a dialogue with it unless it surrendered arms and declared unequivocal support to the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement. Particularly absurd, according to the official view, is the militants' demand for the return of the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) to the October 10 position.

The two basic requirements are not new but, in the changed context, the Government has made their acceptance a precondition for talks. The official stand was outlined by the Defence Minister, Mr. K. C. Pant, who, along with the Minister of State for External Affairs, Mr. Natwar Singh, briefed the Opposition leaders on the latest in Sri Lanka. Mr. Natwar Singh also updated his statement to Parliament last Friday, when he announced the ceasefire.

The meeting was useful, for it provided an opportunity for interaction to the two sides on this sensitive issue, specially when Parliament did not take up the situation leading to and resulting from the resumption of the IPKF operations. Opinions and assessments were sharply divided on the course to be followed now, though most of the participants appeared to recognise the absurdity of the plea for withdrawal of the IPKF to the October 10 position, as also of the action of the LTTE leader, Mr. Prabakaran, in writing to the United Nations.

A section of the Opposition felt that New Delhi should have tried the path of negotiations instead of resuming operations. The Government representatives explained the rationale behind the move. The ceasefire was announced, the Ministers said, in the hope that the respite thus provided to the LTTE would be utilised by its leaders to join the political processes envisaged in the Agreement. The Government was strengthened in the belief by what the LTTE deputy leader, Mr. Mahatiya, told the Indian Commanders at the time of the handing over of the soldiers — that the ceasefire would pave the way for the laying down of arms and related steps. It was a great pity, Mr. Pant said, that instead of responding positively to the ceasefire offer, which was welcomed by all sections, the LTTE came out with a set of nine demands.

Party lines varied, as was reflected by the questions put by the Opposition members. The DMK and the Telugu Desam were highly critical of the Government stand. The AIADMK too made known its disapproval while keeping it in a low key, while the two communist parties and the BJP asked searching questions to elicit information. The Akali Dal representative, Lt. Gen. (Retd.) Jagjit Singh Aurora of the Bangladesh war fame, cautioned the Government against involvement of the Indian troops in a Vietnam-type situation.

Meeting with Kittu in Madras: Mr. P. Upendra, Telugu Desam, made a case for talks with Mr. Prabhakaran and regretted that suggestions to this effect had been brushed aside. On the basis of his recent talk with Mr. Krishna Kumar alias Kittu, the LTTE representative in Madras, Mr. Gopalasamy, DMK, said that the militants were prepared for talks and that the modalities for the laying down of arms could be discussed in the negotiation process. Mr. Gurupadaswamy, Janata Party, too, preferred dialogue to resumption of operations.

It was in response to these queries that Mr. Pant came out with the categorical stand against talks unless the pre-conditions were met. The Government, it was pointed out, could not call the LTTE leader for talks when the IPKF was engaged in the mission of disarming the militants. Mr. Gopalasamy, supported by Mr. Vajpayee, BJP, wanted to know how the security of the militants was to be ensured after they laid down arms. That was what the IPKF was there for, they were told in so many words.

Mr. Dipen Ghosh, CPI(M) inquired whether any assessment had been made of the cadre strength and arms and ammunition at the command of the LTTE. Mr. Natwar Singh replied that large quantities of arms and ammunition had been seized but the militants had managed to get fresh supplies from Singapore and other places. How was this possible in view of the joint patrolling of the Palk Strait Mr. Upendra asked. That was because they operated in a large number of small boats, was the reply.

Self-imposed curbs: At one stage, Mr. Pant remarked that the IPKF could have finished the job in half a day but it had to operate under self-imposed constraints to avoid civilian casulties. Mr. Pant objected to Mr. Gopalasamy's angry reaction to his remark and this led to a minor clash between the two.

Dealing with questions on the attitude of the people in Jaffna and other places, Mr. Natwar Singh said that the IPKF was getting full support locally, with some among the citizens volunteering information on the LTTE hide-outs. Opposition members wanted the Government to be sure of its sources of information and not to rely exclusively on the intelligence agencies which had given misleading reports in the past. One of them suggested that independent observers and journalists be sent there to find out the true position.

Responding to a query by Mr. Chitta Basu, Forward Bloc, Mr. Natwar Singh was stated to have remarked that the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, Mr. M. G. Ramachandran, felt letdown by the LTTE's attitude.

Apart from the discussions at the briefing session, there was an overwhelming feeling here that Mr. Prabhakaran had been ill-advised in making an approach to the U.N.

(Operation Pawan)

CIVILIANS □ KILLED

MYLIDDY	MANIPAY
Sritharan	
S.K. Gugathas	A. Thambiran
E. Kathiravel	M. Mariamuthi
T. Krishnarajah	M. Theeleepan
A. Sebastiampillai	S. Saraswathy
R. Nadarajah	J. Aruganayagam
M. Reginold	A. Nicholas
Jayabalan	K. Gnanasegaram
Veeran	Mariyadas
Poologarasa	T. Jeyasiri
Kanagaratnam	S. Thiruharan
V. Mylvaganam	S. Jeyasuntharan
M. Navaratnam	Thevathasan John
S. Sinnachi	Sooryakumari
Kanthan Ponnu	Sinnathamby
Sivapathy	Sinnathurai
S. Kumaravy	Thambithurai
J.S. Herbert Fernandurai	P. Sellathurai
MEESALAI	A. Benedict
V. Arumugam	V. Annapillai
K. Velupillai	Thanganayaki
MANKULAM	A. Rosammah
I. Jeyarasa	Sivakolunthu
B. Varathanathan	P. Kanapathy
K. Maheswaran	P. Arumaithurai
V. Verasngam	R. Selvarajah
K. Sothinathan	T. Maruseelan
A. Selvarajah	T. Swampillai
K. Sothirajah	N. Annammah
R. Kannah	K. Pasupathy
Jeyarajah	C. Balaratnam
Calnaidu	P. Thavarasah
Rajaratnam	K. Sellathamby
S. Rajeswary	R. Kandeepan

Tamil
TIMES

APOCALYPSE

The pain, agony and fear of a people trapped

Dear Friends

I have lost count of the days
I don't know the day or the date
I know it's more than a month since the war started
You want events, numbers, case histories?
Not now please, because my mind is strangled
I know it's strange, but, that is what I feel
That is what we live
Pain, agony and fear - always fear

I ask you, could you write straight
When people die in lots?
When you find them
Dead like flies - not one, two
Left by the roadside
In Kopay, in town
In Kokuvil, Rasaveethi, Urumpirai
In there, over here
Left on the hospital corridors, to the elements
For the birds and dogs to scavenge?

When you certify death and bury your
Neighbours in their own garden?
When people - thousands and thousands
Always more than ten thousand are
Herded into kovils, churches and schools
For almost a month
When the beautiful sandy precinct of the temple
Becomes nothing but one whole shit dump
A hell hole with a teeming mass of people
When doctors are removing shrapnel and giving drips
And people shit just outside?

If night after night, you lay under the table
With your children, immobile
Listening to the sound of boots
Marching up and down your road
Not even a candle you light
For a shadow or even a sound could kill the whole household

What else?
We have no electricity
We have no money
The majority of the people have hardly any food
Our workplaces are flattened out
We have no functioning hospital
No drugs, no fuel

Fear? Now we know of Rape
I'd like to get together with other women
But I know of nobody to get in touch with
All of us are scattered

The Indian army is everywhere
Walking, in trucks
In open vehicles, closed vehicles
The Gurkhas are even trying out bicycles
And enjoying our livestock
Chickens, goats, everything
'Came hunting tigers
catching goats now'
The people still have their sense of humour

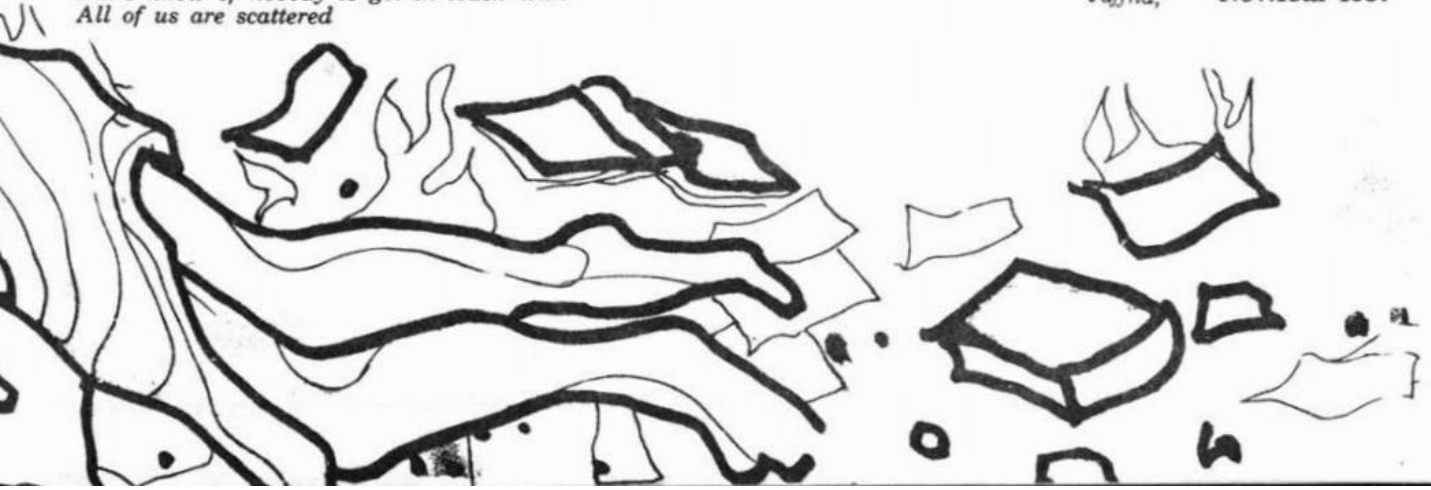
The Gurkhas, the turbanned Sikhs
The southern Indians from various states, speaking Tamil
Such a diverse people - brought to you
Booted, with arms in their hands

Rajiv clearly says, we have gone to Sri Lanka
For our nations's goal
Our middle classes have always been saying
India won't allow Jaffna to be taken
Now India has taken us
Any street you have walked
Any building you have been in
All have been shelled
So thorough is the destruction
The Indian army learns how to smash an urban guerilla movement
Sure to come in handy

On top of all
No one cares for the people
The Sri Lankan government, the Indian army
Not even the tigers nor the other movements
Today we are a trapped people
We are made to walk this suicidal trip
Our great brave defenders and freedom fighters
Lure the enemy
Right to our doorstep
To the inside of the hospital
Start a fight
Ignite a landmine
Fire from each and every refugee camp
Escape to safety
And then come the shells whizzing, whizzing
Bloody hell
Tigers have withdrawn, while
We the sacrificial lambs
Drop dead in lots

15 years of war
And now a hopeless halt
Our society has no will to organise
It is totally crumbled
There isn't a single civilian structure to connect up with
The era has demised with
So much loss
And bitterness all round

Jaffna, **Nov.18th 1987**



AFFIDAVIT

SUBRAMANIAM PARAMASAMY, born 1941.04.01 at Bharathi Road, Kambarmalai, Valvettiturai.

I am the father of Paramasamy Paramanathan (19 years) who was arrested by the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) on 16.11.87.

On 16.11.87 about 10 a.m. the IPKF made it known that they were distributing free rations near the reading room in our locality (Kambarmalai).

My wife (Rasaledchumy) went to collect the free rations offered at by the IPKF.

While the rations were being distributed, the IPKF men suddenly arrested the young males among the crowd and in the vicinity of the reading room at Kambarmalai.

Some of the youths who were caught were bound hand and foot and put on the ground in the scorching sun.

My son Paramasamy Paramanathan had earlier left home for the tutory, it being a Saturday.

To my wife's horror she found that our son Paramanathan was one of the youths bound and lying on the ground.

My wife and I later learnt that my son was returning from the tutory and as he was passing the reading room, he was caught by the IPKF.

After some time the youths were taken in a van. My son was among them.

That evening I went to the IPKF Camp at Valvettiturai but was refused permission to see my son.

Thereafter for nearly 8 days I went to the said Camp daily but was always refused permission to see my son.

Thereafter on one occasion when I went to the same Camp, I was told that my son and other youths who were arrested together had been sent to the IPKF Camp at Kankesanthurai.

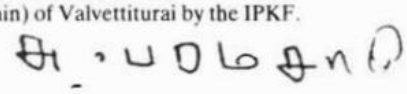
About the fifteenth day after the arrest of my son I sent a letter to the IPKF Town Commandant at Jaffna appealing for the release of my son.

About the end of the December, 1987, two of the boys (Jegathiswaran and Premanathan) arrested along with my son, met me and told me that my son had been beaten to death by the IPKF.

In January, 1988 Varatharajah another youth who was arrested with my son and who was freed later, met me and gave me details of how my son met with his death.

He told me that my son was severely beaten along with him and that he (my son) died as a result of injuries received during the beatings.

My son died on the second day after his arrest. My son's body was buried at Vallai - Velli - (Vallai Plain) of Valvettiturai by the IPKF.



MUTHUTHAMBY PANCHALINGAM (48) Palaly Road, Urelu East, Chunnakam.

The deceased Somupillai Ariyanayagam, aged 70 years bachelor was my uncle being my mother's younger brother.

After my parents death which occurred while I was a small child it was my uncle who raised me.

Due to the intensive military operation in our area we left our residence and sought refuge at the Ganeshavidyalaya Urelu.

My uncle due to old age refused to accompany us and preferred to stay at home.

We used to visit him whereever possible and to prepare our meals.

On 16.11.87 I was informed that my uncle was shot and killed by the army at about 6.30 a.m. just outside our house gate.

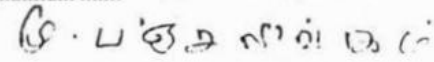
On hearing the news which reached me only at about 4 p.m. I rushed to my residence.

I found his body lying in the road about 25 yards from the gate.

There was a gaping gun shot wound on his chest.

I cremated his body at the spot where his body was found on 17.11.87.

Until his death last November he was residing with my family as it is my duty to support and maintain him.



SELLAN MYLAN, (65) Manthuvil Kodikamam.

My son Mylan Sivam, 25 years, my two daughters and I were living in our own house at the above said address.

On 16.11.1987 at about 4 p.m. my son left for our garden close by to water chilly plants.

At about 2 p.m. IPKF surrounded our area and started firing at random.

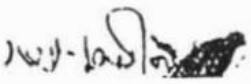
At about 6 p.m. one T.Kunam a relative of ours who went to his farm came home and informed that my son was shot killed by the IPKF in our farm.

I rushed to the farm as the IPKF left our locality and brought the dead body home with the assistance of our relations.

The dead body of my son bore an injury in his chest.

Cremation took place on 17.11.87 at noon at Pluven cemetery.

My two daughters and I lost the only earning member of our family.



SUBRAMANIAM JEYAKUMAR (23)
NIC No 64 179 2977 V Kaally Kovil, Thavady South, Kokuvil.

I am one of the sons of the Late Arumugam Subramaniam (52) who died on 17.11.87 as a result of shooting by the IPKF.

I and my three brothers and three sisters left home on or about 10.11.87 and took refuge at Pathirakally Hindu Temple at Thavady.

My father chose to remain at home.

On 17.11.87 at about 10 a.m. IPKF soldiers arrived in the locality of our house. Which was only 75 yards from the temple where we had taken refuge.

The IPKF soldiers were shooting while in the said locality.

The IPKF within about 10 minutes.

Since we feared for the safety of our father, I and my grandmother went towards our house.

When I went home we found my father shot dead at the entrance of our house.

There were bleeding gun shot injuries on the region of his stomach.

We buried the body in a temple garden nearby.

Death Certificate No 1616 was issued in respect of my father's death.

The surviving seven members of our family are I, Subramaniam Jeyakumar (24), Subramaniam Paskar (20), Sumathy (18) Rasan (15), Vanitha (13), Anitha (9) and Rasin (7) all sons and daughters of the deceased.

MATHAN THARUMU Nagalingam Road, Thavady South, Kokuvil.

My wife's brother Murugan Ganesu died as a result of gun shot injuries on 18th November, 1987 at Thavady.

My wife Sinnammah wife of Tharumu and deceased Murugan Ganesu were in the refugees camp, during the violence errupted in our Area.

On the 18th November, 1987, both my wife and her brother Murugan Ganesu ande some others left the camp in search of rice and provisions for the day meal.

While they were going along the road, the Army personnel opened fire and my cousin was one of the victim and died on the spot due to Gun fire.

His body was identified by me and Sinnathamby Theiagarajah of Nagalingam Road, Thavady South, Kokuvil.

My wife's brother Murugan Ganesu lived with us for last 25 years and he looked after me and my wife.

As my cousin had promised to look after me, I bequeathed him everything I had.

I am a disabled person and my right leg badly affected by polio.

Therefore, Now I am out of income. I have lost my chief mainstay of my family.

RATNASABAPATHY SAROJENITHEVY (45) widow of Inuvil West, Inuvil.

The deceasedd Apputhurai Ratnasabapathy, aged 55 years was my husband.

He was working as a Cigar-roller.

During the November 1987 disturbances we sought refuge at the Madathuvasal Pilliyar Temple Inuvil.

On 18.11.87 at about 2 a.m. my husband went outside to urinate.

A shell fell within the temple compound and exploded, critically wounding my husband.

My husband died at about 7.30 a.m.

His body was cremated in a nearby field on the same day.

I have three children including two daughters.

My children and I have been deprived of the maintenance and support we received from my husband.

I do not have any income after his death.

SARATHADEVI, widow of Vallipuram Shanmugasundaram, Inuvil South.

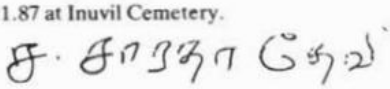
The deceased is my husband, Vallipuram Shanmugasundaram, aged 50 years.

On 18.11.87 while we were in our house a shell fell on our house and exploded.

My deceased husband received injuries on his chest and legs. I could not take him to any hospital because of the tense situation.

He succumbed to the injuries on 19.11.87.

The body was cremated on 20.11.87 at Inuvil Cemetery.



ESWARY AMMA AYATHURAI (62) Veemankamam, Tellipalai.

The deceased Velupillai Ayathurai aged 71 years was my husband.

On 18.11.87 our area was subjected to heavy shelling.

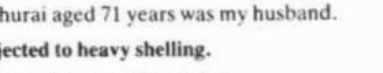
At about 7 p.m. a shell fell near our house and exploded.

My husband became excited and complained of a chest pain.

He died within a on hour.

The death of death was due to heart failure as a result of shell shock.

His body was cremated at the Kothiavadi cemetery.



Mrs. KAMALAMBIKAI THANGARASA (30) 465/3, K.K.S. Road, Jaffna

I am a widow.

The deceased, my husband Sinnathurai Thangarasa aged 36 years was the owner of a mini-bus and was earning an income of Rs. 2,000/- per month by transporting people.

My two sons aged 10 and 8, 2 daughters aged 12 and 5 and I were living with my late husband at 465/3, K.K.S. Road, Jaffna.

Due to the IPKF military operation, I along with my husband and 4 children took refuge at Navalar School, Jaffna on 20.11.87.

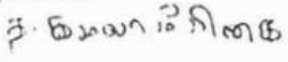
While remaining in the above school premises, shells fired by the IPKF started falling in the premises and exploded.

On 26.11.87 at 5.30 p.m. when my husband was standing in the school premise along with some refugees he was killed by the shell explosion on the spot along with 6 other Tamil Civilians.

All the dead bodies including that of my husband was burnt by the IPKF the same day at 6.30 p.m. in the school premise.

I have no means of living.

I may be given assistance to look after my children.



NITSINGHAM NAGESWARY (56) Hospital Road, Chankanai,

The deceased person Thambiah Nitsingham, aged 58 years was my husband.

He was a Farmer.

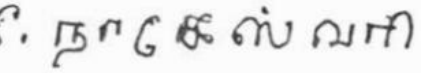
On 20.11.87 at about 9.30 a.m. my husband left for Jaffna Town.

He did not return home afterwards.

On the following day I came to know that he was killed in a shell blast at Arukal Nadam, Anaicoddai on 20.11.87.

I learned that his body was cremated by the army itself.

I do not have any income.



PARARAJASINGHAM ARUNTHAVARANY (52).

The deceased Kasipillai Pararajasingham aged 47 years was my husband.

He was a Farmer.

On 20.11.1987 at about 8.00 a.m. my husband left home saying that he is going to Neervely to purchase some provisions.

At about 3.00 p.m. I was informed that my husband was seriously injured after being caught in the cross fire during a battle between the army and the militants at about 10.30 a.m. while he was returning from Neervely.

I rushed to the place and brought my husband who was in unconscious state.

He died within few minutes of his arrival at our house.

He had a large gunshot wound on his abdomen.

His cremation took place on 21.11.87 at Achchelu cemetery.

His father who was living with us also died of shock following his son's death.

I have two children.

My children and I have been deprived of the maintenance and support we received from my husband.

We do not have any income and undergoing untold hardship.

P. Aravinthan

Mrs SUSEELADEVI PARAMANATHAN (34)
Sivahami Amman Kovilady, Inuvil East, Chunnakam.

On the 20th of November 1987 my husband Kanapathipillai Paramanathan (38) left home at 6 a.m. to visit his farm close to Karaikal Sivan temple Inuvil situated about 1/4 mile from our home.

At about 8 a.m. the same day I was informed that my husband had been shot dead by Indian Peace Keeping Force Personnel opposite the Karaikal Sivan Temple.

As IPKF personnel were in the area none could proceed to the spot immediately. The dead body of my husband was brought home only at 12 noon.

The dead body of my husband bore gun shot injuries, an entry wound on his chest and an exit would on the back of his chest.

The dead body of my husband was cremated the same day at 4 p.m. close to the Rail track as the body could not be removed to the cemetery.

My husband was a farmer and we were depending entirely on the benifits derived from the cultivation of these plots.

My husband leaves behind myself and 3 children, 2 daughters aged 7 and 5 and a son aged 8 years.

My father-in-law Vyravanathar Kanapathipillai (74) and my mother Manicker Rasammah (70) were provided for and looked after by my husband. husband.

P. [illegible]

PARAMESWARY wife of Sellappah Paramasamy, 3-Notary Lane, Ariyalai, Jaffna.

On the 21st November, 1987, which is our festival-Deepavali day, my husband Sellappah Paramasamy, aged 55 years and a labourer by profession, was at home with us.

On the above-said day, the personnel of the IPKF came to our house and took my husband into custody.

Thereafter my husband's whereabouts are not known.

I would submit, with all respect to the Commanding officers of the IPKF that the IPKF cannot deny responsibility to my husband's safety or plead ignorance to my hsuband's whereabouts in view of the fact that my husband was taken into custody in my presence and that of my children at our house.

I have four chidlren, three of them are learning in schools.

My husband is the sole breadwinner of our family, and we have no other income whatsoever.

Mrs. THAVARANJITHAM SOTHINATHAN (32) Brown Road, Kokuvil East, Kokuvil.

The deceased Somasuntharam Sothinathan, aged 35 years was my husband.

He was a Farmer.

Due to the IPKF military offensive I sought refuge at Pathirakali Amman Kovil along with my daughter and husband

As I was ten months pregnant I had pains on 21.11.87 morning from 8.00 a.m. onwards.

Immediately my husband left the above temple refugee camp and went home to collect some clothes for me to admit to the Jaffna General Hospital for confinement.

As my late husband was getting late to return and due the increase of pain I was taken to the hospital by my mother.

On 26.11.87 while I was in the ward, to my dismay my brother-in-law came to the hospital and informed me that my husband was shot and killed on 21.11.87 by the IPKF at Thavady junction and the body was burnt on the spot by the army itself.

Due to the sudden demise of my husband the sole bread-winner of my family I am now made destitute along with my child 1½ years and undergo untold hardship without any income.

S. Thavaranjitham

Mrs. GANGADEVI SHANMUGARATNAM, (37) Urelu West, Chunnakam.

I am the daughter of Mrs. Nallammah Vaithilingam who was killed in a shell – blast.

I am the youngest daughter and my 75 year old mother lived with me and was looked after and maintained by me

At about 11.30 a.m. on 23.11.87 a shell fell on the Tamarind tree standing in the house-compound and blasted.

My mother who was standing in the court – yard was struck by shrapnels darting from the explosion, causing severe bleeding injuries on her neck and legs.

As I rushed to the spot I found she was dead.

Her dead body was cremated at Pokkanai Crematorium on 23.11.87 at about 3.00 p.m.

My husband is a casual labourer.

I have three children who are all school going.

[illegible]

MAHATEVAN RAJESWARY (33)
Memorial Lane, Manipay North, Manipay.

I am the mother of Mahathevan Thileepan (02) who died on 24.11.87.

I am also the daughter in law of the late Mrs. Marimuthu Nagammah who died on 24.11.87.

On 24.11.87 about 3.00 a.m. a shell fell in the front premises of our house.

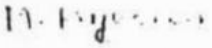
The shell burst and struck my said mother-in-law and my child. Both my mother in law's body was cremated the next day. My child was buried the next day.

Death certificate No. 1739 and 1740 were issued in respect of the deaths of my child and my mother in law, Marimuthu Nagammah, Mahathevan Thileepan.

My late mother in law was a widow at time of her death.

She has two surviving children - one my husband and the other Mrs. Indranee wife of Rasalingam of "Eswary Indira Vasam", Manipay East.

My mother in law lived with us and was solely dependant on me and my husband.



THEVARAJAH MANGAYATKARASI (31), Palaya Vaikal, Mirusuvil.

The deceased person Rajaratnam Thevarajah aged 32 years was my husband.

He was a Businessman.

On 24.11.87 my husband left for his shop.

At about 5.00 p.m. I was informed that my husband was shot and killed by an army patrol outside his shop at Mirusuvil.

His body was buried at Mirusuvil Catholic burial ground.

I have two children.

IYAMPILLAI RAJARATNAM Navakiri, Atchuvely.

On 25.11.87 there was a direct cross firing and a clash between the IPKF and the LTTE near my sister's house which was situated by the side of my agriculture land. **One of the gun shots attacked my sister, Iyampillai Pathmavathy who was unmarried and she died instantaneously.**

I have sustained a further loss of my belongings to the tune of Rs. 1,10,000/- by way of damages and missing items.

IYATHURAI YOGESWARY (37) Kovil Veethy, Inuvil South, Inuvil.

The deceased person Suppar Iyathurai, aged 70 years was my father.

He was staying with my family.

On 25.11.87 at about 11.15 a.m. a shell launched by the army fell within our compound and exploded.

My father was struck by the shrapnels darting from the explosion and sustained injures on his head and right leg.

My mother died instantaneously after being struck by the shrapnels.

My father received treatment from a private practitioner.

We could not take him to the hospital due to the curfew imposed during the period.

He died on 25.11.87 despite the treatments given to him.

His cremation took place at Thavadi cemetery on the same day.

I: yogeswary

NANNIAR THURAISINGHAM (54) Uduvil South, Manipay

The deceased Ponnan Sellam aged 77 years was my mother-in-law being my wife's mother.

During the November 1987 military offensive we sought refuge at the nearby Enjadi Vairavar Temple Suthumalai.

As my mother-in-law is very old she refused to accompany us to the temple and opted to stay at home.

On 25.11.87 at about 5.30 p.m. I returned to my house.

There I found my mother-in-law crtically injured in a shell explosion which also damaged our house.

She died four hour later.

Her body was cremated at the Thavadi cemetery on 26.11.87.

She was living with us until she met her tragic end.

PONNIAH SELVARATNAM (46) Dutch Road, Inuvil, Chunnakam.

My late brother was assaulted by the IPKF while he was at home on 25.11.87.

He was taken to a private medical practitioner for injuries on his two legs.

He was taken to the Jaffna General Hospital only on 7.1.88 and discharged on 20.1.88.

He died 6 days after being discharged from hospital.

The cause of death as specified therein states - injuries received in assault during disturbances and shock.

My late brother was not married.

I have three other brothers and a sister.

I am a line man in the CEB.

My late brother was a labourer (part time).

He lived with me and was supported by me.

RATNASABAPATHY PATHMAVATHY, (53)
C/o S. Ratnasabapathy, Rail Road, Kondavil West, Kondavil.

The deceased Nadarajah Sinnamma, aged 75 years widow was my mother.

On 25.11.87 at about 7.00 a.m. a shell fell within our compound and exploded.

Shrapnels darting from the explosion and the glass splinters flying from the shattered window struck my mother and injured her.

We could not take her to the hospital due to the prevailing situation.

She died at about 12 noon.

Her body was cremated at the Karaikal cemetery on the same day.

She was living under our care until she met her tragic death.

APPADURAI THIYAGALINGAM, (41) Thavady North, Kokuvil

I am son of the late Mrs. Appadurai Thangammah who was killed in shell blast on 26.11.87.

At about 6.30 a.m. on 26.11.87 when my mother was standing in the court yard of the house, a shell fell in the compound about 30 yards away from her and exploded.

Shrapnels darting from the explosion struck her causing a severe bleeding injury on her chest.

She died within 15 minutes before any medical attention could be provided.

Her dead body was cremated at the Thavady Crematorium on 27.11.87.

SUNDAY

Mauled by the Tigers

Injured IPKF personnel at the Command Hospital in Pune recount the grim experiences of fighting the LTTE guerrillas in their fortified bastions in Sri Lanka

REPORT

Far removed from Jaffna city, where armoured cars are a familiar sight and mine blasts a regular affair, where snipers on house and tree tops and armed women and children have lent a new dimension to street-fighting, the injured Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) personnel at the Command Hospital in Pune recount grim experiences of the guerrilla warfare waged by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam (LTTE) in Sri Lanka.

"Booby traps, camouflaged high voltage wires running on open ground for about two km, remote-controlled mines, the LTTE has used all possible ruses and tricks of the trade to hinder the IPKF and make our task as difficult as possible," says Major Anil Kaul of the Armoured Regiment, who lies severely wounded at the officers' ward of the hospital. Major Kaul, who has served in the army for 15 years, was hit by a rocket propelled gun (RPG) which injured his right eye and left hand, while he was going to rescue a troop of paracommandos of the Sikh Light Infantry, barely hours after he landed at Jaffna on 12 October.

He recalls: "We had reached a T-junction and were deciding whether to turn left or right. With my hand on the commander's cupola, I tried to come out of the tank when the rocket hit the tank. I was bleeding profusely and couldn't see properly but my immediate reaction was to go back inside and fire. Ultimately we got to the place where the boys were. Sometime during the night I was given a shot of morphia and later—time was of no consequence then—of pathedine. I was groggy most of the night, but carried on normal conversation. I was brought to a safe house and evacuated only 14 hours after I got hit. Thereafter, I have been under dedicated medical care."

Major Kaul was sent to Madras and then to Bangalore. Later he reached Pune on 5 October. He has already been operated upon five times and requires a sixth operation soon. His right eye will have to be reconstructed too. At Pune, his father, Brig. (retd.) K.K. Kaul, and wife Rekha are at his bedside, but his two daughters, aged ten and six, are back home in central India, where he was stationed before he left for Jaffna. Like Kaul other injured IPKF personnel were taken to different southern cities before being brought to Pune, the headquarters of the Southern Command, which has outfitted the IPKF in Sri Lanka.

Naik Dhrampad Singh (38) from Haryana has served with the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) for 15 years. He was sent to Sri Lanka on 23 September and was based in Trincomalee. However, when the fighting escalated on 10 October, he was patrolling the lone police station in Jaffna. "On 14 October, we were warned of an attack. Firing started around midnight." Hurt in his left upper arm, he is at the Command Hospital for reconstructive

Vallabha Kulkarni

AWWA delegates visit the injured IPKF personnel at the Command Hospital and (inset) an IPKF jawan keeps vigil near Jaffna

(plastic) surgery.

Twentyfive-year-old Shyamlal Bhatt of the Garhwal Rifles was injured when a mine blew up in Batticaloa. "Twelve of us and a JCO were patrolling the area in a three-tonne truck. I was carrying the wireless. After driving for 35 km and around midnight we could not make contact with platoon number two and three. We decided to go ahead and check what had happened. Between platoon number two and three there is this four km area which the LTTE had mined. As we reached the centre of this area, the mines blew up on both sides. We opened fire, but our truck blew up. I was among four or five casualties," he says. A bullet pierced through from just below Bhatt's right eye to his left cheek. He was sent to Madras two days later on 13 October. In Pune, he has regained vision in one eye and has been assured that the other one would heal too. But he has not sent news of his injury to his parents and wife back home in Uttarkashi in UP. "I sent them a normal letter. I did not want to frighten them," he explains.

Bhatt is now looking forward to returning to Jaffna. *"Fouji aadmi isi liye to paala jata hai* (a soldier is trained for this)," says he and goes on to recount his experiences: "The LTTE lured us by running into houses and as we opened the door, a mine would blow up. When we went up the stairs, another mine would go off. Women and children too fired at us." Adds Kulwant Singh, a sepoy with the Sikh Light Infantry, who received a bullet in his right arm from a sniper on a treetop: "As Indians, we would feel sorry for the women and children and move back. The LTTE used this to their advantage."

According to B.B. Malgavi, naib subedar clerk with the Maratha Light Infantry, "Even eight and ten-year-old children and pregnant women were armed." Malgavi, whose right leg was injured during an attack, was in Sri Lanka since 31 July. He says with a faint trace of bitterness, "We (the IPKF) went to help them (the LTTE), to see that they got a good deal. And they respected and even welcomed us at first. They surrendered arms but that was apparently not all they had. When the problems began and the IPKF intervened, they transferred the blame on to us."

According to a defence spokesman, the casualties have been heavier because the IPKF was fighting a peculiar battle. It had to capture a city without harming the civilians. Says Major Kaul: "We were instructed not to kill innocent civilians, but how were we to distinguish between an innocent and a Tiger? Or between a Tamil, Sinhalese or Christian? The only difference was whether they were armed or not. For instance, a crowd shouting slogans came out from a semi-settlement and advanced towards us. And then, before you could say Jack Robinson, they sat down and LTTE men opened fire. The day I landed in Jaffna this is how I was briefed: 'Today there is a curfew, so anybody outside is an LTTE. But we kept our restraint. However, when we saw firing from houses, we returned fire and we did blast a couple of them out of the way. There was, for instance, this house where a white flag was being surreptitiously waved from a window. Even as I was pointing this out to a colleague, they opened fire from inside the building. It was through sheer sixth sense that I had swivelled the commander's cupola to the side for protection and this saved me."

Shyamlal Bhatt of the Garhwal Rifles, who was injured when a mine blew up in Batticaloa, recalls, "The LTTE lured us by running into houses and as we opened the door, a mine would blow up. When we went up the stairs, another mine would go off. Women and children too fired at us"

B.B. Malgavi, a naib-subedar clerk with the Maratha Light Infantry, says, "Even eight and ten-year-old children and pregnant women were armed...We (the IPKF) went to help them (the LTTE). When the problems began and the IPKF intervened, they transferred the blame on us"

Of the total injured, 147 have been admitted to the Command Hospital since 15 October while 47 are at the Military Hospital in Khadki nearby. According to a defence spokesman, the aircraft which left Pune with supplies, returned with the wounded. He says that only three, including Major Kaul, are seriously injured. The spokesman explained that the injured can be classified into three categories: those who require treatment up to four weeks, those who require it for more than four weeks, and five to seven per cent of whom require even further treatment.

Naik J.L. Babu from Andhra Pradesh is being shifted to the Military Hospital in Secunderabad. Thirtyeight-year-old Babu, who is a driver with the ASC (Army Supplies Corps) battalion, was injured while driving from Killinochi to Jaffna on 11 October. Swerving to avoid a group of LTTE men armed with Light Machine Guns (LMG), he ran over a mine. He was brought to Madras in an unconscious condition. Though he can move about now he has lost his sense of hearing in his left ear.

According to Major Vohra, the medical officer at the Command Hospital, 54 of the 80 injured men in ward number three in various stages of recovery (the IPKF casualties are occupying two wards of the 500-odd bed hospital), were transferred to hospitals in Secunderabad and Agra on 27 October. Several more are to be transferred, while some are even going to be discharged. This is being done not only to make room to admit others but also to keep the injured closer to their base and/or next of kin.

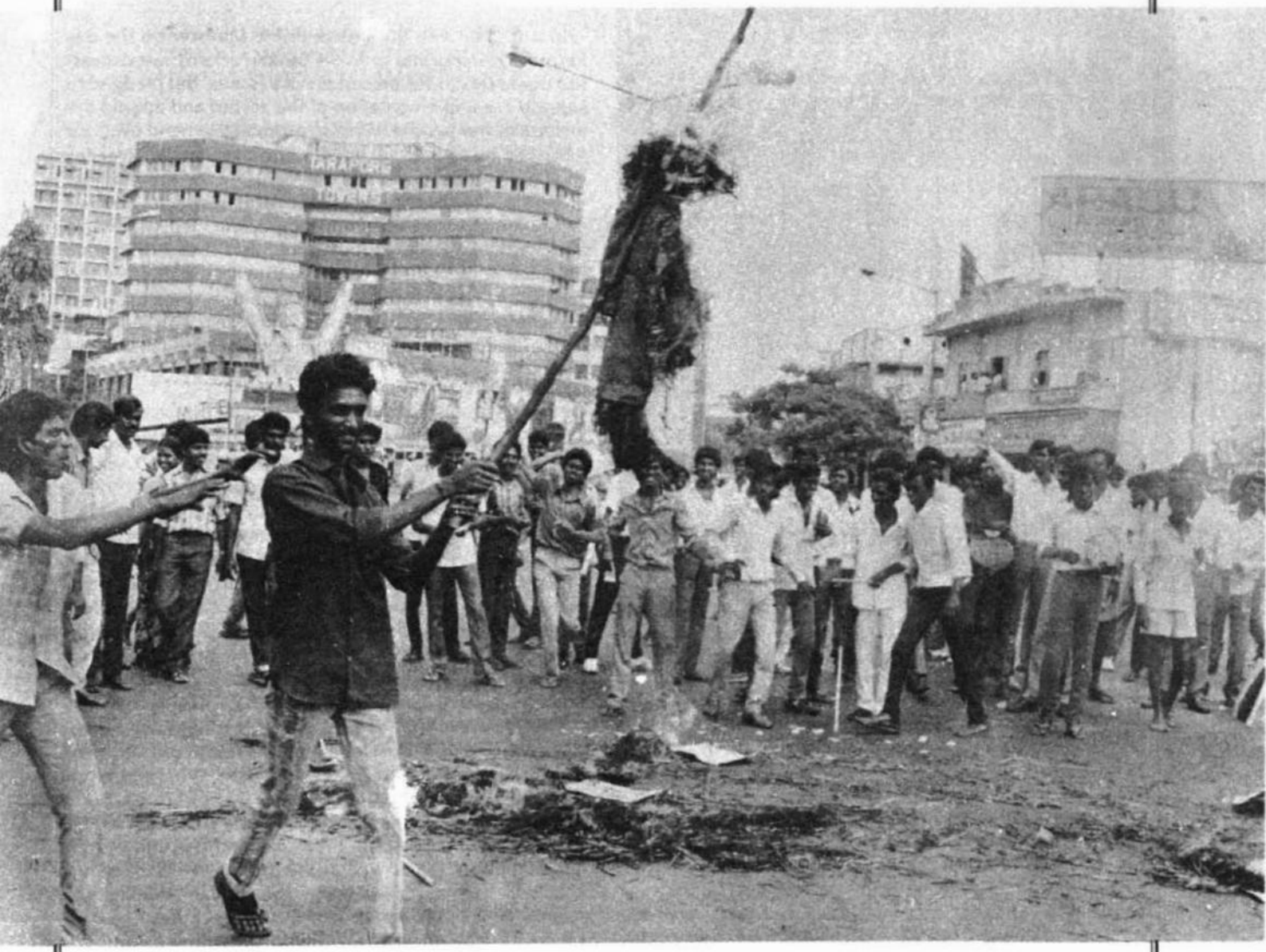
However, at the hospital in Pune, no effort is being spared to make the soldiers both mentally and physically fit. The president of the AWWA (Army Wives Welfare Association), Mrs B. Depinder Singh, started off by presenting a transistor radio to each of the wounded. Subsequent delegations of the AWWA as well as local charitable and women's organisations and college students has flooded the immates with flowers, fruits and so many other things to express their good will. But it is not all that easy to cheer up the soldiers who have had a bitter experience in Sri Lanka. When a group of women visited the hospital on the day of Bhai Duj (brother's day), one anguished voice cried out, "The women in Jaffna were my sisters too. And look what they've done to me."

Ranjana Kapur /Pune 15-21 November 1987

RAPED

21.11.87	Annaikoddi/Jaffna	A girl (then killed)
22.11.87	Neervely	A women
23.11.87	Aragampathy	Miss Yogaranee Thangarajah (19)
24.11.87	Puthur, Vadarawathai	20 females
25.11.87	Valachenai	2 women.
26.11.87	Kiran/Batticoloa	4 women
	Kondavil west	Mrs. G. Selvanayagam
27.11.87	Morakottanchenai	2 women (one of them Maragatham)
	Kondavil West	Satgunavathy
30.11.87	Nalady, Valaichekki	3 Muslim women and one Tamil girl

கற்பழிப்பு முறைதானோ?
கண்ணியம் என்பது இதுதானோ?
சிங்களன் பாதையில் செல்வதுசரிதானோ
இட்லரின் வழியில் இந்திய அரசா?

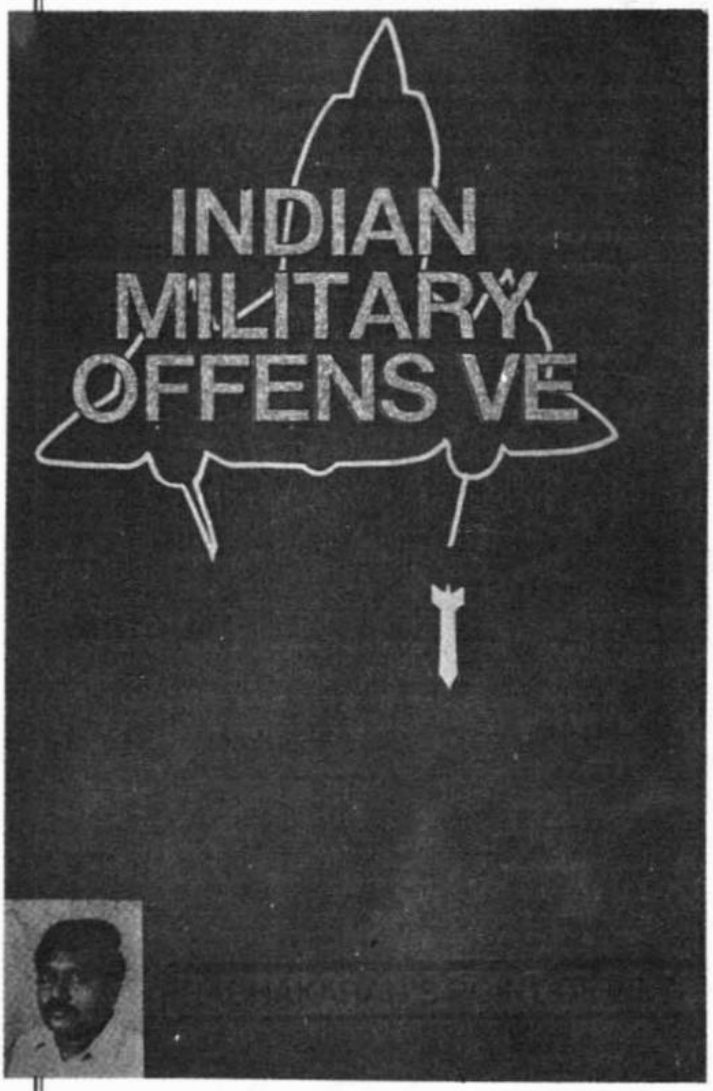


Protestors burnt the effigy of Mr. Rajiv at Madras

DMK posters condemn rape and other atrocities of the Indian Army

நம்மினத்திற்கே கேடு விளைவிக்கும்
மத்திய அரசிற்கு நம்எதிர்ப்புக்கணைகள்
தமிழர் இன உணர்வு பேரொளியாய்
சுடர் விட்டும்!

இவண் 13 வது மாவட்ட தி.மு.க. இளைஞரணி.



The INDO-LTTE Conflict

CRITIQUE

Our point of view.

It is a tragic paradox that the Indian Peace Keeping Force which arrived in the Tamil homeland with a mandate to maintain peace, to protect the life and property of our people, to foster cessation of hostilities between Sri Lankan troops and Tiger guerrillas are now engaged in a full fledged war against the LTTE. This war has brought disasterous consequences with a heavy toll of civilian casualities, immense sufferings to our people with severe disruption of their socio-economic existence. Having engaged themselves in a war with violence, brutality and terror, the IPKF has lost its status as an instrument of peace but has assumed the role of a repressive invasion army, typically eliminating both the Tamil Freedom fighters and innocent civilians. The Indian military intervention has again shattered the peace in the Tamil region, shattered all civic hopes of return to normalcy and caused violence and bloodshed. Along with the military offensives the Government of India has mounted a massive propaganda war to rationalise and legitimise her action. This propaganda campaign is vicious, malicious and distortion of truth, aimed to discredit our organisation in the eyes of the Indian and World public opinion. It is precisely for this reason, we wish to articulate our point of view on the developing of Indo-LTTE conflict and the consequences that followed.

In our talks with the Indian Prime Minister on the day before signing of the Indo-Sri Lankan accord, we expressed our reservations on certain vital issues, but pledged to support the implementation of the accord and uphold the interest of our people. We also promised to hand over our weapons on certain guarantee and assurances given by the Prime Minister of India. Recognising the pre-eminent role of India in the South Asian region, respecting India's Geopolitical sensitivity and compulsion, we wanted to avoid any conflict with Indian interests. But at the same time we were sincerely concerned with the interest and political aspirations of our people. We sincerely felt that the sections of the accord, which deal with the set of proposals for setting up of Provincial Councils fall short of the Tamil aspirations. We thought that the Government of India understood our position.

INDIAN PROMISE OF INTERIM ADMINISTRATION - NEGATIVE ACTIONS BY SRI LANKA & 'RAW' - LAPSES IN INDIAN DIPLOMACY

One of the assurances given by the Indian Prime Minister was the formation of an Interim Administration with LTTE playing a dominant role. There was a delay in this matter. In the meantime, the Sri Lankan Government had suddenly launched a programme of intensive colonisation of Tamil areas in Mullaitivu and Trincomalee districts. Further more, Sri Lanka has started opening up police stations in Tamil areas with the calculated plan of re-establishing its state apparatuses in the Northern Sri Lanka. Alarmed over this development, we registered our protest, with India, but no action was taken. What was more disturbing at that time, was the arrival of armed Tamil groups from South India, who, with the patronage of the IPKF, established bases in the North and East and started harassing the LTTE as well as the public. We were rather shocked and surprised why the Indian Intelligence Agency 'RAW' has armed and despatched these men to the Tamil areas at a sensitive time, when the peace process was introduced, when disarming was taking place. This was one of the main reason that led to our disenchantment with the policy of the Indian Foreign Ministry. It is because of these negative developments, our movement launched a fast unto death campaign spearheaded by Mr. Thileepan, which soon expanded into a massive non-violent agitation with the active participations of the people. On the 9th day, when Thileepan was reaching the brink of death, the Indian High Commissioner Mr. Dixit arrived in Jaffna to listen to our grievances. At the first meeting, Mr. Dixit offered BIG assurances which failed to

meet our 5 points demand. The fast continued and Thileepan died. It is after Thileepan's death Mr. Dixit offered some concrete proposals for the setting up of an Interim Administration. If the Government of India had acted without delay Thileepan's life would have been saved. His death was a tragic loss to our movement and to our people. This tragedy further added to the estrangement of relations between India and the LTTE.

SILENCING THE MEDIA, THROTTLING THE VOICE OF TAMILS HERALDED THE MILITARY OFFENSIVE BY THE PEACE KEEPING FORCE.

In this war which has lasted more than a month and a half what has shaken our people is the brutal and ruthless manner the Indian troops behaved, with a war-weary population who has already suffered immensely at the hands of Sinhala military. The war could not be confined to the LTTE but extended into a military action in comparting the entire Tamil masses with an extend of terrorising and subjugating them. In the early hours of 10th October, 1987, the day the offensive started, the Indian troops confiscated all the copies of two daily news papers, 'Murasoli' and 'Eelamurasu', blasted with explosives the printing machinery and arrested the journalists and workers. On the same day LTTE's Television Station 'Nitharshanam' was also closed. This highhanded action to silence the local media which functioned as the only voice of the Tamils, constituted a serious violation of the freedom of the press and expression. Our people were shocked to see that India, which claims to be the guardian of democratic ideals has adopted a totalitarian method to muzzle the Tamil media.

RUTHLESS ACTIONS - INNOCENT CIVILIANS AT THE RECEIVING END

The military of the IPKF was callous and ruthless with total disregard for human lives and property. It appeared the resistance by the LTTE caused a good amount of material on board at the armoured column which opened up with the mortar and artillery shelling on civilian areas, took heavy toll of civilian casualities. Aerial raid by helicopter gunships caused severe devastation. Several areas the troops went in, tortured and massacred innocent civilians. Tamil women were raped. Even elderly and the children were tortured. Houses and shops were plundered. Hospitals, schools and temples were bombarded. Troops stormed the Jaffna hospital and massacred a large number of sick and injured. In this offensive operation several hundreds of innocent Tamil Civilians were senselessly done to death and hundreds of them sustained injuries primarily due to indicriminate shelling. Many of the injured died without treatment.

PROPAGANDA WAR BY INDIA - MEDIA MEN AND HUMAN RIGHT ACTIVISTS KEPT OFF

Our allegations of military brutality by the IPKF was rejected by India by a full scale propaganda. But the Government of India refused to allow the Indian and the International press to visit the affected areas and interview the public. The colombo based journalists who witnessed the events of war in Jaffna for nearly two weeks had reported the horrors of military atrocities to Sri Lankan Government on the request of the Indian High Commission. Without communication link, there was a total black-out of news. In the meantime, the Government of India utilised the state controlled media to malign the Tigers and put out fabricated stories, about the war. We pleaded with India to send a team of observers from Amnesty International and International Commission of jurists to investigate the violation of human rights and extra judicial killings. The Government of India turned down the request.

The military offensive operation undertaken by the IPKF brought extreme hardships to the civilian population. The electricity and water supply were purposely cut-off. The food and medical supply from the rest of the Sri Lanka was blockaded. Public transport was halted. There was restriction on fishing. There was continuous round the clock curfew in Tamil areas for a month with occasional relaxation in certain specified areas. Because of these hard measures, the innocent civilians suffered immensely with the total disruption of their social and economic existence.

The LTTE leaders, pointing out the human tragedy brought about by this war, appealed to India for a cessation of hostilities and start negotiations to bring about peace and normalcy. But India continues to insist that LTTE should lay down the arms and surrender and accept unconditionally the Indo-Sri Lankan agreement.

VIOLATION OF AGREEMENT BY SRI LANKA - WITHDRAWAL OF GENERAL AMNESTY - INDIA LED TO THE TRAP

The incident that led a severe blow to India-LTTE relation was the arrest and detention and the tragic death of our two regional Commanders and 10 senior members. Though they were arrested by the Sri Lankan Navy, they were kept in the protective custody of the IPKF at the Palaly camp, while negotiations were taking place, between Mr. Dixit and President Jayewardene in Colombo. Though Sri Lanka insisted on taking our leaders to Colombo for interrogation, we were given assurances by the Indian side that they would be released. The arrested Tigers had already warned both Sri Lanka and India that they would swallow cyanide pills and kill themselves rather than facing torture and possibly death in the hands of the enemy. We argued with the Government of India that the arrest of these LTTE leaders and cadres constitute a serious violation of the agreement, wherein LTTE men were given General Amnesty. The two weapons they had were for the personal protection of the regional Commanders. We also insisted that the protection of the lives of our members, was the responsibility of the IPKF which assured the role of avoiding any clashes between the Sri

Lankan troops and the Tamil guerillas. We also warned India of a possible outburst of violence if these men were massacred. Our plea to secure the release of our leaders was a minor concession we demanded from both India and Sri Lanka, we have just entered a major agreement with the objective of resolving the ethnic conflict. But J.R. Jayewardene was adamant, intransigent and belligerant. Mr. Dixit, was well aware of the disasterous consequences of the Sri Lanka's obstinancy failing with diplomatic endeavour. The result was a great tragedy. The massacre of 12 prominent LTTE men who were true heroes of Tamil Liberation has, outraged the Tamil sentiment. Pulendran, the regional Commander, Trinconamalee and Kumarappa, the former regional Commander of Batticaloa, were highly respected leaders. Their tragic death sparked of spontaneous racial violence which resulted in the death of several Sinhala civilians. Sri Lanka accused the LTTE for the outburst of violence and killings. India too joined Sri Lanka in blaming the Tigers. What followed was a high level conference in colombo between India and Sri Lanka in which a series of tough measures, including military action against the LTTE were decided upon.

PROXY WAR OF INDIA - JAYEWARDENE SCORES

The decision to involve India in a war against the LTTE was a major diplomatic victory for Jeyewardene. India, which has been hither to accused of providing sanctuary and assistance for the Tamil resistance movement, suddenly took over Sri Lanka's military job of liquidating the Tamil freedom movement. A week earlier the LTTE was officially recognised by both India and Sri Lanka as the major representative organisation of the Tamils and was marked to form an Interim Government. But now LTTE was banned, and the amnesty given to the movement withdrawn. The IPKF which played the role of a protector and Peace maker was turned to an instrument of terror of war. India, thus finally fell to the diplomatic trap of the Sri Lanka's racist ruling regime and turned the guns against the Tamils.

LIMITED CHOICES TO LTTE

The LTTE, was left with no choice other than to fight for self-preservation and die with honour rather than surrender with humiliation and perish. Even in our wildest dreams we never contemplated a war with India. We never wanted to fight the Indian soldiers whom we regarded with great admiration and love. But the Indian leaders forced us into a situation which has left us to choose between honour and humiliation, between self - preservation and death, we decided to resist. Yet we pleaded with India to call off the unjust war against our movement

TRAGIC PARADOX - INDIA CHOSE TO IMPOSE DEMOCRATIC WILL BY MILITARY ACTION

It is surprising that the Government of India which had advised Sri Lanka for several years to give up the military option and solve the problem by peaceful negotiation is adopting the similar methodology of military offensive, terror and torture to impose its will on the Tamil people. India's attitude is unfair and undemocratic. LTTE, the main representative political movement of the Eelam Tamils, should not be denied the democratic rights of the freedom of decision and expression. In so far as the Indo-Sri Lankan agreement is concerned we reserve the right to articulate our view. In our view, the set of proposals envisaged in the accord for the settlement of the Tamil problem has serious limitations, therefore fall short to fulfill the political aspiration of our people. Hence, we pledge to extend our co-operation to the implementation of the accord in so far as it upholds the rights of our people. Therefore it is unfair and unreasonable for a democratic country like India to demand unconditional support for the accord at the point of a gun. We hope that the people of India would appreciate and understand our position on this matter.

ISSUES AND NON ISSUES

On the question of surrendering arms, we pledged to handover our weapons to India and accordingly, LTTE was the first organisation which handed over substantial portion of its arms, as a goodwill gesture towards the implementation of the accord. Furthermore, we agreed to handover the rest of the weapons according to modality worked out, in the minutes of the deliberations we had with the Indian High Commission. We wanted to co-operate with India on the question of arms. There was no need for us to possess arms once the ethnic question is amicably settled with adequate guarantee for the safety and security of our people. Now I feel the real problem is not simply the possession of arms, but the crucial issue of the protection of life and interest of our people. Therefore we earnestly request the Government of India to abandon its military approach and engage in negotiations on the question of arms and other relating matters.

GESTURE OF GOODWILL AND A SALUTE TO PROTECTORS OF DEMOCRACY

In the presence of the jounalists we release the 18 captured Indian soldiers unconditionally. This action is on purely humanitarian reasons and as a gesture of goodwill towards the people of India. We hope the Government of India will respond to our desire for peace and call off the offensive operations and open door for peaceful negotiations of substantial benefits.

In India, it was the journalists, who have been preserving and protecting the concepts of democracy. To honour them we decided to release 18 captured Indian soldiers in the presence of Indian Journalists.

V. Prabhakaran.
Leader, Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam

Jaffna.
18.11.1987.

Stance on LTTE not softened

From Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, Nov. 28

The stance of the Government of India with regard to the LTTE leadership seems to have retained the tough edge taken by the Minister of State for External Affairs, Mr. Natwar Singh, while announcing the 48-hour ceasefire on November 20. The Government disappointment over the lack of a positive LTTE response was borne out by the statement issued by the External Affairs Ministry spokesman following the expiry of the period, which referred to the LTTE's actions in killing fellow Tamil militants and members of the Sinhala and Muslim communities.

The Government action was the result of suggestions made by a number of prominent people who had said that the time-period would be helpful in allowing the LTTE to reach a decision on the surrender of weapons and the acceptance of the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement, the two requisites laid down by the Indian side. The November 20 ceasefire declaration was finally touched off by the signals given by the LTTE's deputy leader, Mr. Ajit Mahatiya, to senior IPKF officials at Chavakacheri at the time of handing over of the first nine of the 18 Indian captives. Mr. Mahatiya had wanted some sort of reciprocity for the LTTE action and was not insisting on the hardline position subsequently adopted, calling for a return of the IPKF to the positions of October 10. Among the issues raised by Mr. Mahatiya was the issue of the security of the LTTE cadres in the event of their surrendering arms as well as their rehabilitation. The first of these issues has been repeatedly raised and answered by the Indian officials who have pointed out that the security of the disarmed LTTE cadres has been their responsibility from the beginning. The second issue has been addressed by the Government's detailed offer to rehabilitate any LTTE cadres who choose to surrender.

IPKF will reckon with LTTE sniping: Pant

NEWS

LUCKNOW, Nov. 29.

Confrontation on an organised basis in the Jaffna peninsula of Sri Lanka has come to an end with the dispersal of LTTE men, but the possibility of continued sniping had to be reckoned with, the Defence Minister, Mr. K. C. Pant, said today.

Replying to newsmen's questions after a "bara khana" with officers and jewans of the Central Command here, he said it was very difficult to set a time-limit for peace to return to the island-nation.

Asked about the possibility of foreign forces behind the LTTE, Mr. Pant said: "In such situations, various types of forces come into play."

The Minister attributed the upsurge in the LTTE activities in the Eastern Provinces of Sri Lanka to the movement of the hard-pressed LTTE cadres from Jaffna to the east. He, however, refused to comment when asked whether the IPKF would now be shifted from Jaffna to Batticaloa and the other affected areas in the east to deal with the situation.

Mr. Pant reiterated that India was committed to the implementation of the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement and would not allow "anybody or any force" to come in its way. He said he was hopeful that the LTTE would see reason and surrender its arms.

Mr. Pant visited the base hospital and talked to the wounded IPKF officers and soldiers who were flown here. Most of them who have almost recovered told the Minister that they were "raring to go back" to rejoin their regiments on the frontline in Jaffna.

In India's interest: Defending the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement, the Defence Minister asserted that it was in the interest of the Sri Lankans, the Tamils and India itself.

It was in the interest of India because "certain elements and mercenaries were getting involved in the ethnic conflict and the possibility of more forces not friendly to India getting in there was very much on the cards".

Asked to comment on the presence of Israeli mercenaries in Sri Lanka, Mr. Pant said, "the IPKF is keeping vigil in Jaffna and the Eastern Province. It is our troops who are on the ground".

Interests not the same: When his attention was drawn to the criticism of killing of the Tamils whose interests India wanted to safeguard, Mr. Pant said, "The interests of the Tamils and the LTTE are not the same always".

On the recent 48-hour ceasefire being utilised by the LTTE for regrouping, the Minister said, "I don't think any major regrouping could be done".

He said although India was a peace-loving country and wanted friendly relations with its neighbours, "experience has taught us that peace cannot be maintained unless others too wanted it. "That is why our objective has been to remain alert and be in a position to defend the country's borders on our own strength," he said.

Modernisation drive: Mr. Pant told the jawans that the Government was making all efforts to ensure that the Indian troops did not have to face any disadvantage on the front. "We have procured modern arms for you and would continue to do so." He, however, told them not to relax vigilance on the borders.

The Defence Minister said that along with the modernisation drive, efforts were also on to seek self-sufficiency in defence production. Our scientists have achieved a breakthrough in armament production," he said.

Exposure to 'urban warfare': Major R. S. Rathore of the Mechanised Infantry, who was wounded in action on the outskirts of Jaffna, told newsmen that this was the first time that the Indian Army had been exposed to 'urban warfare'. "This was a novel experience for us and we have learnt a lot."

This was also the experience shared by personnel of the other regiments. Mr. M. Muthuswamy of the Madras Regiment said the "LTTE was ruthless. They caught me in a crossfire and even as I shouted to them in Tamil, they replied with a hail of automatic gunfire."

Mr. Jagroop Singh of the Sikh Light Infantry said the Army Headquarters had informed his family promptly of his getting wounded in battle and had shifted him here from the Command Hospital in Pune after an operation so that he could be near his family. — UNI, PTI

The Telegraph

Is this the time to celebrate the fall of Prabhakaran's village?

COMMENT

Ashok Mitra

The president of the World Bank honoured us by a visit earlier this month. He pleased offficialdom by announcing a special loan to the tune of 350 million US dollars, or close to Rs 560 crores. The loan will help the government, he assured press correspondents, to fight the battle against this year's unprecedented drought by facilitating the import of foodgrains, edible oils and petroleum products. Since the additional strain on India's balance of payments on account of the drought, according to the Bank president's own estimate is likely to exceed, Rs 1,300 crores, the loan would help only partially. And he did not mention the other factors which are going to add to the nation's fiscal and external payments burden this year: a minimum extra outlay of Rs 1,500 crores because of the war we are engaged in to liquidate the Tamils in Sri Lanka, and defence purchases of an undisclosed amount from the United States which our Prime Minister committed himself to during his recent trip to Washington, DC.

But these payments are—or should be—the Government of India's worries, not the World Bank president's. The Bank, as spokesmen of the US administration never tire to inform Congressional committees, is an instrument for the implementation of American foreign policy, which has two principal current concerns vis-a-vis the governments of the poorer countries: (a) arms purchases by these governments must continue unimpaired, and a large chunk of such purchases should take place from the American market, and (b) they should increasingly "liberalise" their system, that is, allow free import of foreign goods and capital, and create such conditions as will encourage private investment of all hues. The turmoil in the stock exchanges and the resulting convulsions in the American economy make it imperative that these objectives are pursued with greater vigour, so that any slackening of demand within the United States itself could be partly compensated by larger exports to the countries of the so-called Third World. The loan of 350 million US dollars is sophisticated bribery. Following his meeting with our Prime Minister, the World Bank president was beaming all over: the bribe will work, the Government of India he felt confident, will not stray from the path of progressive liberalisation and reliance on market incentives the Bank has been preaching to it.

In other words, the Bank president must have received a kind of commitment from either the Prime Minister himself or some of his colleagues that despite the deepening fiscal and balance of payments crisis, India will not reduce its purchases from overseas, the present level of imports of capital goods, luxury consumption goods and arms and weaponry will be maintained, the tempo of liberalisation will not be slowed down, and, despite domestic political difficulties, there will be no reversal of the policy, vigorously pursued of late, of permitting private investors to have a very large say in determining the direction the economy should move.

True, as champion panhandlers of the world, we have practised almost to perfection the art of being all things to all men; if next week a trade delegation arrives from the Soviet Union and mildly enquires about our long-range economic intentions, we would be equally capable of instantly churning out an essay which will prove that our system is even more socialistic than that of many East European countries. Nevertheless, the superciliousness with which major economic issues are being handled in New Delhi cannot but cause intense worry. Retail prices and cost of living indexes suggest that we are once more in the throes of double digit inflation, but official sources turn a Nelson's eye and keep referring to trends in wholesale prices. Within two years of its being launched with much fanfare, the Seventh Five Year Plan has collapsed; both its targets and its resource calculations have fallen by the wayside. Farm output will perhaps drop by as much as 10 per cent this year, the explosive industrial growth for which the votaries of liberalisation had made advance claim is visible nowhere, and a steep decline in national income is inevitable. A cloak of secrecy shrouds the government's fiscal operations, the nation is not told how bad the state of affairs is. Even if account is taken of some improvement in revenue collection over what was anticipated in the Budget, and the proceeds of the new World Bank loan are thrown in, the arithmetic cannot but be frightening, since the splurge of expenditure, particularly in the name of defence and also in part to provide natural calamity relief, has been mind-boggling.

The mind can be boggled though only if you happen to possess one. Giving a bloody nose to Velupillai Prabhakaran has emerged as the principal objective of governance; substantive issues have lost their relevance. All talk of curbing non-essential expenditure thus has an air of unreality. By cutting down on the foreign trip of one or two junior officials or by postponing the purchase of stationery and furniture in this or that government office, you save only fractional amounts. The Government of India's largest spending outfit is the ministry of defence. When the sums are added at the time of the presentation of next year's Budget in February, none need bat an eye if defence expenditure is found to overrun the amount originally budgeted for by at least Rs 2,000 crores. The defence budget in the current year, if only we care to remember, was already higher by 40 per cent than what it was last year. Obviously, even the sky is not the limit here.

Something however has got to give. So the usual exercise is on. It is development expenditure which is dispensable. Already word has gone round that Plan outlay for each state

Drop in Sri Lanka defence expenditure
COLOMBO, Nov. 17.
With a significant drop in the defence expenditure from the current year's Rs. 10.6 billions to Rs. 9.2 billions and salary increase for government employees, Sri Lanka's Finance Minister, Mr. Ronnie de Mel, presented his country's budget for 1988 in Parliament today.
The expenditure on national security has also been substantially slashed from Rs. 59 millions in 1987 to Rs. 10 millions in 1988
Keshav
DEFENCE SPENDING IN LANKA
Keshav, The Hindu, 20.11.87

and each Union ministry in 1988-89 will be frozen at this year's level. There will be no growth of national income this year, there will in fact be a decline. The government's prescription for remedying the situation is to cut back further on development activities. The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund will applaud from the sidelines. Their perseverence in trying to train up the boys in the Government of India is bearing fruit; the government, they have been stating all along, must curtail its spending, and allow scope for private initiative. These international organisations are discriminating, that is, choosy. They do not disapprove of all types of public spending; they frown upon spending for development, but not upon defence spending.

Within the government, there is seemingly little of residual capability or will to channel thinking along directions which do not toe in entirety the Bank-Fund line. The subversion has taken place over a number of years. With a Prime Minister whose instinctive sympathy is for an elitist economic philosophy, a ruling party populated by mostly gutless, self-seeking individuals, and an Opposition which is incapable of proceeding beyond cliches, it will therefore be empty bravado to talk of putting a halt to the process. For reasons of political exigency, there will of course be constant prattle about socialist principles and the need for a strong and resilient public sector, and voluminous shedding of crocodile tears over the plight of the nation's poor. All this will be in conformity with the conventions of hypocrisy. Meanwhile, the World Bank president has extracted a commitment. India will follow the rigid capitalist path, come what may. She will keep her system open, open to the maraudings of transnational corporations and international private banks, and will not mind walking into an external debt trap.

For that is precisely where we are heading. Suppose the current crisis in the stock markets forces the American administration to reduce drastically the size of its Budget deficit and, at the same time, to cut back on imports. The consequences for countries like ours will be two-fold. First, the US contribution to the World Bank's soft-loan affiliate, the International Development Association, will be slashed, scotching the project of increased concessional credit from that body. Second, once a general curtailment in imports is decided upon, our exports of garments and other textiles, leather goods, handicrafts, diamonds and jewels and such like to the United States will fall dramatically. Provided Wall Street continues to behave in the manner it has in recent weeks, the scope of the World Bank to raise funds in the American capital market will also be narrowed, placing a further constraint on the Bank's ability to lend to countries such as India.

Consider the other grave possibility too. Given their extensive stock-holdings in the United States, many affluent families in the Gulf countries will begin to feel the finch. One consequence could be a major drop in construction and other activities in these countries. Once that happens, the enormous remittances we have been receiving from our workers over there could simply evaporate.

There is no indication at all that any of these uncertainties is bothering the regime in New Delhi. No reappraisal of economic or other policies is on the anvil. Defence outlay continues its upward climb, there is no attempt to clamp down on the import of petroleum products, and the morale of the urban fringe of the nation is sought to be sustained by Reliance Cup-like hooplas. The likely outcome at the end of the next few years is a bulge in our external payment obligations for which we will have no cover. The Fund and the Bank will regret their inability to finance us further, the wolf will be at our door, we will have to borrow heavily, and at high interest rates, from private international banks so as to service the past borrowings. That is to say, we will be entering the classical debt trap.

None is however listening. Prabhakaran's village near Jaffna has fallen to our troops, Let us celebrate.

THE STATESMAN

(Operation Pawan)

CIVILIANS KILLED

MANIPAY

T. Cyril	S. Paheetharan
T. Somasuntharam	K. Kanahammah
A. Mary Loyala	S. Sathasivan
N. Vethanayagam	N. Sellakandu
K. Thavaluxmy	M. Nagamuthu
S. Sri Ranganathan	N.A. Selvararaja
M. Pararajasingam	A. Sukanyah
K. Thanabalasingam	T. Selvaratnam
Rasalingam	Mahadeva
Parimalasingam	T. Jeyaratnam
N. Vijayaratnam	S. Kanagar
R. Nileshan	K. Kandiah
K. Thayaparan	M. Palagowry
K. Rathinam	S. Thesingarajah
R. Manoharan	K. Kumarasamy
J. Alexander	K. Sellathurai
I. Ponnammah	P. Kandiah
[illegible]	[illegible]
S. Suganthini	S. Arunthavarajah
J. Michel	S. Ladchumy
A. Gnanapragasam	A. Velayutham
T. Sritharan	S. Sinnapody
V. Rajendran	A. Thambirajah
K. Nadarajan	R. Selvaratnam
K. Sinnathurai	S. Nagaratnam
S. Ponniah	T. Sinnathamby
Sivapala	S. Thangamany
S. Thuraisingam	K. Manimuthu
K. Mahadeva	N. Mahendran
T. Achchipillai	T. Cyril
N. Paramaguru	S. Maheswary
C. Patkunarajah	K. Sinnathathurai
R. Thiruchelvam	K. Velauthapillai
P. Thambirajah	Thioglus

A NO-WIN SITUATION

EDITORIAL 24.11.87

THERE can be no doubt that the much-publicized release of 18 IPKF prisoners in Jaffna, following which India was compelled to announce a 48-hour cease-fire, was an impressive propaganda victory for the LTTE. Being dependent on a domestic reaction in this country to ease the military pressure on the Tigers, Mr V. Prabhakaran has shrewdly calculated that token gestures such as the release of the jawans and carefully worded homilies aimed at Mr M. G. Ramachandran will increase the pressure on Mr Rajiv Gandhi to extricate himself from the mess in Sri Lanka. Certainly, President Jayewardene's blunt anti-Tamil Nadu tirade earlier this month, what might be described as Mr Premadasa's show of ingratitude and even Mr Gamini Dissanayake's muted misgivings, have provided valuable ammunition to those who are under the belief that Indian interests will not be served by fighting Colombo's proxy war against the LTTE. The near-unanimous acclaim that greeted Mr Natwar Singh's unilateral cease-fire announcement in Parliament on Friday was an indication that there is no domestic consensus behind the Indian involvement in Sri Lanka; it also suggested that there is total confusion as to the future course of action. Not surprisingly, Mr Pirabhakaran has not been slow to capitalize on this strategic impasse.

Obviously, there is a strong lobby in both Madras and New Delhi which is opposed to the IPKF training its guns against the LTTE out of a misplaced sense of ethnic solidarity. On its part, the Union Government has contributed to this mushy sentimentalism by failing in the past to stress the crucial distinction between Indian and Tamil interests. Critics of Mr Gandhi's recent anti-LTTE posture can hardly be faulted for believing that Colombo is the real villain of the piece when New Delhi has made a massive show airing its reservations on the devolution package passed by the Sri Lankan Parliament, unmindful of the fact that genuine federalism can only emerge out of a clearly unwinnable referendum. Interestingly, Indian criticism of the devolution package has allowed the moderate TULF a convenient way out of having to oppose the adventurism of the LTTE and directly confront its anti-democratic credentials. It is also likely that the pro-LTTE lobby will be more emboldened if the likely confrontation with the Tigers in Vavuniya results in Sinhalese casualties, which in turn will encourage the more extremist sections in Colombo to indulge in fresh anti-India tirades.

But if New Delhi is ambivalent about its own pro-LTTE lobby—mark Mr Natwar Singh's distinct change of tone in Parliament—it has also failed to keep on the right side of the Sinhalese. It was futile, and somewhat hypocritical, of Mr J. N. Dixit to issue a formal protest against the Sri Lankan Prime Minister's statement that Indian troops would not have needed to sacrifice their lives if New Delhi had not encouraged the militants in the first place, when that is also the prevalent view in India. Indeed, what the policy-makers in New Delhi do not seem to appreciate is that Sinhalese opposition to the Indo-Sri Lankan accord is not based on the rabid anti-Tamil hysteria to which it is often attributed but on a suspicion of India's larger geopolitical imperatives and its violation of Sri Lankan sovereignty. Mr Premadasa may have been unnecessarily abrasive in saying he hoped that hostilities would end by December 4 "because then we will be able to pack them (the IPKF) back home", but he was merely expressing a sentiment that is popular with his countrymen. As it is, the resignation of the veteran Minister, Mr Gamini Jayasuriya, from the Cabinet should send alarm bells ringing for those who tend to exaggerate President Jayewardene's own domestic clout. For the uncomfortable truth is that having blundered into a costly misadventure, India is in a hopeless no-win predicament; the apparent phoney war notwithstanding, a rapid withdrawal still remains the only pragmatic option.

DECCAN HERALD

87 November

Situation in Sri Lanka more complex than it looks

LETTER

Sir, — The recent debate in Parliament on the problems in Sri Lanka has failed to bring out all the complexities of the situation there. The Government benches and some others have tended to simplify matters by putting the blame squarely on the LTTE for the present situation. This is not entirely so.

Surprisingly the Tamil Nadu protagonists of the LTTE have not pinpointed two facts which have contributed to the present situation. The first was the uncontrolled influx of the majority Sinhala people into the Eastern Province soon after the peace accord. The LTTE claimed that under the guise that these were former colonists returning to their homes the Sri Lankan Government was bringing in new colonists so that when the proposed referendum was to be held later the balance would tilt against the merger of the two Provinces. The second was the capture of 17 LTTE men by the Sri Lanka Navy off the Jaffna coast, and the plan of the Sri Lankan authorities to take them by air to Colombo for questioning. All the efforts of the Indian High Commission officials failed to prevent this plan and the LTTE men took cyanide capsules rather than face the questioning in Colombo. Amnesty International has alleged that such questioning involved torture.

Clearly having intervened physically in Sri Lanka there was a responsibility on the part of India to have intervened effectively in both these cases. The return of Sinhala refugees should have been a carefully controlled process with suitable checks to ensure that they were genuine former residents.

The IPKF should have intervened, by force if necessary, as it has now done against the LTTE, to prevent any transfer of the 17 militants from the area of capture to Colombo and should have insisted on interrogation in Jaffna itself.

The perception, proved correct in the event, that India would not use force against the Sri Lankan Government to ensure a fair implementation of the accord has been the main reason for the collapse of the accord and the present mess. Since the Sri Lanka Government has a record of reneging on its accepted proposals it was unrealistic to insist on the total surrender of arms by the LTTE at so early a stage. This should have been a phased out operation running parallel with the implementation of the accord by the Sri Lankan Government.

The significance of the fast to death by an LTTE leader in support of five demands seems to have been lost on our policy-makers. Here was a young man who sacrificed his life by not taking even water. Would anyone, and especially one in his twenties, make such a sacrifice unless he had genuine grievances? What action was taken to look into those grievances even after his death? Anyhow this should have opened the eyes of all involved that they were dealing with deep emotional issues and that simplistic formulae, such as surrender of all arms in a couple of days' time, would not work.

What of the future? There have been demands in Parliament and out for the early withdrawal of the IPKF. But is that possible? Having broken the capacity of the LTTE to wage a stand up fight against the Sri Lanka Army can the IPKF be withdrawn allowing the Sri Lanka Army to rampage through the Northern and Eastern Provinces? Clearly this is unthinkable. India now has a moral obligation to protect the Tamilian population from an undisciplined army. But remaining in Sri Lanka also has ominous portents.

Even before India went into Sri Lanka there were large sections of the Sinhala people who were hostile to India on account of what they perceived as India's role in the problem. That hostility has not lessened quantum wise. If one section has been appeased by the action against the LTTE another, such as the militant JVP, has become hostile for what they consider as an infringement of Sri Lankan sovereignty.

C.J.M. Mathew.
General Secretary,
Rashtriya Sanjay Manch.

New Delhi. 27.11.87

(Operation Pawan)

CIVILIANS KILLED

MANIPAY

K. Pathmasini	N. Arunthavaramu
V. Markandu	Regina Saravanai
S. Sellammah	S. Kanthasamy
Geethanchali	S. Paikiam
S. Rubina	R. Jeya
T. Kathirkamanathan	S. Mahalingam
B. Yoganathan	M. Nadanasabapathy
P. Yoganathan	K. Kanagammah
P. Nagappar	S. Ratnam
S. Selvarani	V. Yogammah
K. Puvanenthiran	S. Sinniah
Violet Philippiah	I. Vamathevan
K. Palan	K. Sooriyapirakasam
S. Seeniammah	P. Sooriyapirakasam
S. Yoganathan	S. Sooriyapirakasam
Sarojinidevi	S. Thayananthan
K. Sithamparanathan	S. Nagamuthu
S. Mariathasan	T. Nagamuthu
K. Kopalan	G. Jeyarajah
I. Sivalingam	V. Sabapathy
P. Nageswaran	G. Suntharalingam
Jeyatharan	S. Sockalingam
Manikkam	Rasammah
Nageswary	G. Nadesan
Jesuthasan	Joskus Darmarajah
Umathevy	S. Sivasubramaniam
T. Pavalaratnam	T. Thurairasa
S. Nageswary	S. Balasuntharam
Cyril Yogammah	T. Vijayasri
V. Murugesu	T. Thavamany
M. Lawrance	K. Nanthakumar
Sri Ranjini	A. Micholas
P. Kumarasamy	N. Thambipillai
T. Thiresamalar	M. Balasundaram

INDIA TODAY

SRI LANKA

A Battle of Wits

REPORT

Jayewardene buys time but accord is still vulnerable

NEW Delhi's entanglement in the Sri Lankan situation is starting to drag it ever deeper into the shifting sea of quicksand that the island's ethnic crisis now resembles. By last fortnight, with the violent opposition to the accord in Sri Lanka acquiring frightening dimensions, South Block was finding itself uncomfortably wedged between a rock and a very hard place. In the inflamed northern part of the country, the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) was making major advances but the Tigers are far from cornered—the daily body count is a sobering reminder that the battle will continue to be a bloody one.

In the south, the situation is even more explosive. The bomb blast that ripped through a crowded market in a Colombo suburb on the day the Sri Lankan Parliament met to debate the accord bill, took innocent lives and injured many more. But the real victim could be the accord itself, now under siege from all sides. The resignation of Gamini Jayasuriya, a senior cabinet minister, in the midst of the parliamentary debate was not all that surprising—he was a "conscientious critic" of the accord. But the timing is crucial.

The bomb outrage which killed 31 persons—Sinhalese, Tamils and Muslims, women and schoolchildren—and injured 130 more, was symbolic of the threat. Two days before the bombing, the full bench of the Supreme Court had ruled five to four that the provincial councils bill and the 13th Amendment to the Constitution did not violate the 1978 Constitution of Sri Lanka, except for two sections. The sections deal with the repeal of the Provincial Councils Act. One of the judges, Parinda Ranasingha, held that if this section was not withdrawn or suitably amended, the proposed amendment would have to be put to a national referendum.

Significantly, four judges ruled that the whole enactment was inconsistent with the Constitution and required a referendum. Their ruling cheered the opponents of the draft laws—led by former prime minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike, two smaller opposition parties and a great many Buddhist organisations which filed petitions in court arguing that the devolution of powers proposed in the provincial councils bill violated the fundamental principles of a unitary constitution.

Since these were the first legislative steps taken by Jayewardene to fulfil his political obligations under the accord, a single decision the other way would have placed the President in a quandary and jeopardised the accord itself, with incalculable consequences.

Jayewardene, who has been staking his life and the survival of his regime on the accord, had one more crucial hurdle to cross. The ruling United National Party (UNP) could count on 140 votes in the House when only 113 were required to pass the bill. But the question of whether the UNP MPs would vote for the bill in the required numbers was in doubt.

The previous week, almost all UNP MPs received a "final warning" from the Deshapremi Janatha Viyaparaya (DJV). If they did not absent themselves, abstain or vote against measures that were "a treacherous sell-out to Tamil separatists and Indian expansionists," they would forfeit their lives and those of their family members.

Sri Lankan Police say the DJV is a front of the banned Janata Vimukti Peramuna (JVP). Since the accord, 51 UNP activists have been killed. The Government's response was to create a party militia. Apart from being provided with armed guards, MPs from out-of-town constituencies were billeted at the Lanka Oberoi and driven to Parliament House in an armed convoy. But despite the threat, they demonstrated their loyalty to the President by backing the bill with an overwhelming majority. "We have sailed with him for 10 years, and we could not desert him now," said one.

But still, the backdrop to the parliamentary drama was bloody. Apart from the bomb outrage, JVP sympathisers staged strikes on campuses, burnt state buses, tried to derail trains and threw three southern towns into darkness by sabotaging power lines. Jayewardene, with his divisions inside the House (140 out of 168 seats) and his armoured columns outside, may have won the Parliament battle. But nobody is under any illusion that his battle to push through the accord will not be a protracted and painful one.

There was some consolation that, in the Jaffna Peninsula, the fortunes of war appear to have finally swung the IPKF way. Having learnt some hard lessons in the initial stages of their war against the

The scene of the Colombo blast

The recent bomb outrage in Colombo is symbolic of the threat that the accord is facing.

Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam(LTTE), the IPKF seems to have mastered its new and unfamiliar operational role. After taking Jaffna, the main Tiger stronghold, the Indian Army's strategy was clear—to push the Tigers out of the congested urban areas into the countryside, where the advantages will be more even. The Tigers know the terrain, but the Indian Army has experience of guerrilla warfare in thinly-populated areas, as in their operations against the rebels in North-East India.

That strategy also had another objective—to put the greatest pressure, militarily and psychologically—on the hardcore leadership, mainly Vellupillai Pirabhakaran, the Tiger leader. Pirabhakaran is rumoured to have been badly wounded in the leg during the IPKF attack on Chavakacheri, and his men have been slowly retreating in the face of the IPKF advance. The Tigers are now breaking up into smaller groups and have re-adopted the hit-and-run tactics they used against the Sri Lankan Army. "Without a regular chain of command, we are confident that they will get more disorganised and scattered. Once the cadre is isolated from the leadership, our main military objective will be accomplished," says an IPKF source.

But so far, the IPKF's main success has been psychological. After securing Jaffna, the IPKF quickly fanned out into the Vadamarachi area, another LTTE stronghold and more important, Pirabhakharan's home ground. By wresting control last fortnight of Velvettithurai, the Tiger leader's hometown, the IPKF has struck a major blow. The operational thrust resembles the classic tiger hunt, an ever-narrowing circle of beaters attempting to drive the prey into the waiting nets.

To ensure that Pirabhakaran and his key lieutenants do not slip out of the noose, the IPKF has attempted to block the known bolt-holes. Tiger hide-outs in Point Pedro, Mannar, Kaytes Island and Maniparai have been secured in the past week. That, coupled with the fact that the IPKF has raided a number of LTTE arms dumps and arms manufacturing units in the western wedge of the peninsula, is also an indication that their intelligence has markedly improved. In most cases, the information has come from rival militant groups but now, increasingly, from local Tamils.

Indian Government sources claim that the mood of the populace has undergone a dramatic change. But having lost ground in the north, the Tigers are still capable of causing havoc in the vulnerable eastern province, as last fortnight's slaying of 20-odd Sinhalese fishermen showed. The IPKF has reportedly flown in 2,000 additional troops into Batticaloa to insure against any such large-scale massacres. The Indian Government has so far ignored appeals for a cease-fire. "We will accept a cease-fire only if the request comes from Pirabhakaran directly, ensuring an unconditional surrender of all arms and an immediate acceptance of the accord," says an Indian official.

For that unlikely eventuality, New Delhi is banking heavily on Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.G. Ramachandran. Rajiv Gandhi quickly rushed his Minister of State for External Affairs, K. Natwar Singh, to Madras to soothe the feathers ruffled by Jayewardene's injudicious remarks in New Delhi critical of Tamil Nadu's role in the island's ethnic crisis.

Indo-Sri Lankan talks in Delhi

PRAMOD PUSHKARNA

New Delhi believes that MGR is the only one who can convince Pirabhakaran to lay down arms.

New Delhi's desperation is based on its belief that MGR is the only one who can convince Pirabhakaran to lay down arms and end the current impasse in northern Sri Lanka. Delhi was overly keen to enlist MGR into mediating between the Indian Government and the LTTE. MGR is believed to have already sent a message through Kittu, the LTTE's Jaffna commander now recovering from a leg amputation in Madras, to Pirabhakaran asking him to issue a statement on arms surrender and in support of the accord. MGR has also reportedly suggested that Pirabhakaran can fly to India for an audience with Rajiv Gandhi if he has any misgivings.

But Tamil fears over the Sri Lankan Government reneging on future promises still exist, especially after Jayewardene refused to budge on the devolution package to the north during his visit to New Delhi. Said Tamil United Liberation Front(TULF) Secretary-General Appapillai Amrithalingam: "We have been assured by the Government of India that Jayewardene would liberalise the provincial council bills at a slightly later stage and give more autonomy to the Tamil province. Jayewardene had said that the presidential proclamation on the merger would come only after the Tamil militants have been fully disarmed. Since the IPKF has nearly completed that job, the President should announce the merger without any further loss of time. That would allay Tamil fears to a certain extent."

But the key to the success or failure of the battle lies currently with Colombo. By ensuring that the crucial bill gets the approval of the Parliament, Jayewardene has bought himself enough breathing space to fight the war on the political front while the IPKF tackles the Tigers. But the options are now increasingly limited—one false step and the weakened edifice of the accord could come crashing down.

—DILIP BOBB with MERVYN DE SILVA in Colombo and S.H. VENKATRAMANI in Madras

NOVEMBER 30, 1987

INDIA TODAY

The Lankan Quagmire

EDITORIAL

NOVEMBER 30, 1987

WITH hindsight, the timetable seems to have been hopelessly optimistic: cessation of hostilities within 48 hours of the signing of the Indo-Sri Lanka accord, the surrendering of all arms in another 72 hours, a general amnesty, the immediate formation of an interim administrative set-up, elections to the northern and eastern provincial councils in three months, and a referendum on uniting the two provinces by the end of next year. By now, all but the last of those steps should have been taken. In fact, not even the first goal (cessation of hostilities) has been achieved. The Sri Lankan situation is messier than ever before, and Rajiv Gandhi's unhappy record of bungled accords continues.

One result is the blast in Colombo last fortnight, which killed more than 50 Sri Lankans. Another is Rajiv Gandhi's laboured effort to explain his Sri Lanka policy to a crowd of drought-stricken farmers in Maharashtra. But worse could be in store. Indian soldiers have already paid a heavy price while battling the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), and now they face the unwelcome prospect of a long-drawn-out guerrilla war that may extract a price out of proportion to possible diplomatic or military benefits. Yet, an immediate pull-out will damage the army's morale. So should the country risk a Vietnam, or should Rajiv do what Henry Kissinger did in Paris: mask a withdrawal from battle with a fig-leaf accord? The choice is not an easy one.

Politically, the accord has run into an almost impossible minefield. Even the moderate Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) has said that the proposed devolution of powers under the bills now before the Sri Lankan Parliament is inadequate, but President J.R. Jayewardene has stuck to his stand that he will not yield further ground just now. The Sri Lankan Supreme Court nearly threw another spanner in the works by decreeing that a referendum was necessary on some provisions of the proposed 13th amendment to the Sri Lankan Constitution. The Sri Lankan Cabinet has quickly moved to prevent this by amending some of the provisions. Nevertheless, these are indicators of the kind of hurdles that will crop up in the future too.

Jayewardene might, as he often has in the past, pull a rabbit out of his hat, if only because his own survival and place in history are at stake. But the fact remains that he has to tread very carefully if he is not to lose the support of the Sinhalese majority. Both Prime Minister Ranasinghe Premadasa and National Security Minister Lalith Athulathmudali have made their dissidence known: Premadasa even launched an anti-Indian tirade at the United Nations. The blast in Colombo was another warning signal. Perhaps inevitably, Jayewardene has been blowing hot and cold too, making intemperate remarks about Tamil Nadu and the TULF before somewhat modifying his stand. He is either not sure of his own position and cannot keep his ministers in line, or he is being the old fox that many regard him to be.

Other pressures restrict manoeuvring this side of the Palk Straits. The mood in Tamil Nadu is uncertain, and could pose problems if fighting continues on the island or if either of the Dravida parties in the state successfully whips up Tamil feeling. Both Jayewardene and Rajiv have to tread gingerly.

Neither leader has covered himself with glory since the accord was signed in late July. Under Jayewardene's nose, the eastern province continued to be 'colonised' by the Sinhalese, obviously with the intention to influence the outcome of the proposed referendum on merging the northern and eastern provinces into a single administrative unit by reducing the Tamils to a hopeless minority. And the almost deliberate insistence on taking captured Tamil Tigers to Colombo to stand trial (provoking the mass suicide and everything else that followed) did not speak of a desire to sort out a long-standing ethnic problem as amicably as possible.

Rajiv Gandhi in turn has obviously underestimated both the chicanery and will-power of the LTTE, even as he aroused its suspicions after the accord was signed, by allowing Indian security forces to be partial to the non-LTTE militant groups. Militarily, the most serious error was in giving the LTTE time to mine and booby-trap Jaffna town in a manner that made the final assault on the town so costly. Even before this, Indian troops were committed to a difficult task on alien soil without enough thought to what might happen if things go wrong.

At the moment, proposals on defence treaties are being combined with hopeful talk of provincial elections being held next month. But the over-all situation remains fluid and unpredictable because there are so many players with completely conflicting interests and objectives. If the Government's present strategy of pulverising the LTTE and bringing it to its senses works, the accord still stands a chance of being implemented. If not, there should be a fall-back strategy aimed at reducing the army's role on the island, in order to avoid getting into a protracted guerilla war. Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.G.Ramachandran should meanwhile be used as a conduit to communicate with the LTTE and bring the Tigers to the talking table. With an army pull-out of some sort and the navy ensuring that no fresh arms reach the Tigers from outside, Jayewardene and the Tigers should then be asked to come to terms with each other, with India playing the role of umpire rather than combatant in somebody else's war.

AFFIDAVIT

Mrs. MANONMANI CHINNIAH KULANTHAVELU (50) Iyanarkovilady, Alaveddy North.

The deceased is my son Kulanthavelu Paramagurunathan, aged 19 years.

My late son worked at the Durga Amman Temple.

On 26.11.87 while he was at the temple a shell fell in the temple compound and exploded.

The shrapnels from the explosion struck my son on his chest and legs. He died at the spot.

The body was removed to Alaveddy on 27.11.87 and cremated there.

My husband does not live with me. The deceased son was supporting me with his earnings.

I have no means of living. I may be given some assistance.

RAMANATHAN KAMATCHI (52) C/o M. Kandasamy, Thavadi North, Thavadi.

The deceased person Murugesu Ramanathan, aged 60 years was my husband.

He was a Farm Labourer.

Due to the November 1987 military offensive I left my residence along with my children and went to Akarayan.

My husband refused to accompany us and opted to stay at home.

On 26.11.87 I was informed that my husband was shot and killed by the army while he was on his way to the Suthumalai Amman Temple on 20.11.87.

I learned that his body was cremated by relations on the same day itself.

I have three daughters and a son.

My son is deaf and dumb and remains at home.

After my husband's death we do not have any income and undergoing untold hardships.

SITTAMPALAM PONNAMMAH (52) Panipulam, Pandatherippu.

The deceased Sittampalam Sathiyapalan, aged 24 years was my son.

He was a Farmer.

On 26.11.87 at about 8.00 a.m. my son left for his farm.

At about 5.00 p.m. **I was informed that my son was killed in a shell blast while on his way back from his farm.**

His body was brought home in a bullock cart.

His body was cremated at Champalthurai cemetery, Chulipuram on 26.11.87.

I have two children.

It was my late son who supported and maintained our family.

Now we do not have any income.

THEVASULOSANA RATNASINGHAM (27), Kovilady, Uduvil, Chunakam.

The deceased Ponniah Vijayarajah aged 21 years was my younger brother.

He was employed as a driver.

On 26.11.87 as my brother was languishing with a fever he set out to see a doctor at Uduvil.

At about 2.00 p.m. I heard that he was shot and killed by the army near the Uduvil American Mission School.

His body was brought on 27.11.87 at around 6.00 a.m.

His body was cremated as Uduvil Cemetery on the same day.

He was residing with us until he met his tragic end.

SINNATHURAI SELVARATNAM (33) 4th Mile Post, Anaikoddai.

The deceased child Selvaratnam Pathmarajini, aged 7 years was my daughter.

During the November 1987 disturbances I sought refuge at the Ladies College, Manipay with my family.

On 27.11.87 at about 6.00 p.m. we went towards our house to bring back some necessary things.

A shell fell on the road and exploded fatally injuring my daughter.

She died before we could seek medical assistance.

Her body was buried at the Manipay Annammah Church burial grounds on the same day.

I have four children.

SATHASIVAMPILLAI GUNARATNAM (48) School Lane, Thavadi, Kokuvil.

The deceased Sathasivampillai Ganesharatnam, aged 39 years a bachelor was my brother.

He was working as a temporary Labourer at the Irrigation Department.

During the October-November 1987 disturbances Kokuvil was subjected to shelling and intensive military operation.

We fled from our house and took refuge at the Kokuvil Manjavanapathy Murugan Temple refugee camp.

On 27.11.87 at about 7.30 a.m. my brother left the temple saying that he wanted to inspect our deserted house.

As he did not return that night I became highly worried.

On 28.11.87 I left the temple in search of my brother.

On my way I was informed by my relatives that my brother was shot and killed by the army at Thavady.

I found his body with gunshot injuries at Nandavil Lane, Thavady.

I removed his corpse to Thavady cemetery with the help of some relatives and buried it there on the same day.

I was the guardian of my late brother S. Ganesharatnam who was not married.

S. Ganesharatnam

Mrs. SATKUMAMANI SIVALINGAM (39)
Katpulam, Urumpirai East, Urumpirai.

My mother Ponnan Iyah (67) and my aged father Vairavan Ponnan, my husband, children and I were residing at the above address.

On 27.11.87 my mother Ponnan Iyah who was in a lane by the side of our house was shot dead by Indian Peace Keeping Force personnel at about 9 a.m.

My husband was away from home and on getting to know that IPKF were approaching I fled with my children.

My mother who had difficulty in walking was lying to follow when she was shot dead.

My father Vairavan Ponnan has lost his eyesight both my mother and father were cared and look after by me.

I have 6 children aged 15, 12, 10, 7, 4, 1½.

The dead body of my mother was buried in a barren land some distance away from our home.

சி. சற்குணமணி

BALASINGAM SELVARANY (45)

Uduvil North, Uduvil.

N.I.C. No. 42 763 1273 V

I am the widow of the late Vairavan Balasingam (45) who died on 28.11.87.

On 28.11.87 at about 5.00 p.m. shells started falling near the house we lived in.

My husband, I and the children ran towards the nearest Church - Our Lady of the Rosary.

The church and compound were full of people who had taken refuge there.

We could find place only in the compound of the Church.

A shell fell soon afterwards in the Church compound.

My husband died on the spot, several were injured and taken to Hospital.

My husband's body was buried the next day.

Death certificate No. 1502 was issued in respect of my husband's death.

Cause of death as specified therein is: - shock and haemorrhage resulting from shell injuries.

The names of dependents including myself are:

(a) Selvaranee Balasingham (wife) (46 Yrs) Midwife

(b) Balasingam Balahiritharan-Son (14) Student

(c) Balasingam Vellparan-Son (12) Student

(d) Balasingam Nivethini-daughter (10) Student

(e) Balasingam Nitharsini-daughter (08) Student and

(f) Balasingam Pratheepan-Son (05) Student

My husband was an Attendant at the Tellipalai Government Hospital in receipt of an income of Rs. 740/- per month.

My salary as a Midwife will not be sufficient to maintain myself and the children since my husband is dead.

ப. செல்வராணி

DAVID THERESAMMAH (37) 82, Manipuri, 3rd Cross, Colombuthurai.

The deceased person David Stephen Kennery, aged 19 years was my son.

My son was engaged as a welder.

On 28.11.87 at about 8.00 a.m. son left home saying that he is going to the welding shop at Colombuthurai.

At about 4.00 p.m. I was informed that my son was shot and killed by the army at Colombuthurai.

His body was brought home and buried at St. Mary's burial grounds on 29.11.87.

I have eight children.

My husband is a poor labourer and it was my late son who bore the burden of supporting our large family.

டே. தேவதாஸ்

Mrs. POOPATHY MYLVAGANAM (28) Mudaliyaveli Lane, Kerudavil, Chavukachcheri.

I am the widow of the late Ganapathy Mylvaganam killed in army firing.

At about 8.00 a.m. on 28.11.87 my husband left home on his push cycle to the Chavakachcheri Market for the purchase of provisions.

After making the purchase as he started on his homeward journey, he was fired at by the soldiers who had taken position in the upper – floor of market buildings.

He fell dead on the spot on the Kandy road.

On receipt of information of his demise, my brother-in-law rushed to the spot to find my husband lying dead in a pool of blood with chest injuries.

His corpse was brought home at about 1.00 p.m. on the day.

The funeral took place on the following day and his body was cremated in the Vembirai crematorium and Meesalai South.

My late husband Ganapathy Mylvaganam was Manager of the Chavakachcheri Branch of the Palmyrah Development Board, in receipt of a monthly salary of Rs. 1000/-

I have five children, three girls and two boys.

Since the demise of my husband, I am left with no maintenance of support to bring up my children and attend to their up-keep and necessities.

மு. பூபதி

SINNARASAH VASANTHAKUMARI (21), Kundukulam, Chunnakam West, Chunnakam.

The deceased person Vadivelu Sinnarasah, age 27 years was my husband.

He was employed as a farm labourer at time of his death.

On 28.11.87 my husband was working in a farm.

At about 5.30 a.m. army was advancing along the road which ran by the side of the farm firing in all directions.

Sometime later I heard that my husband was shot by the army and I rushed to the scene.

His body was cremated by the army the same day.

I have two children.

I was depending on my husband's income until his untimely death.

Now I am left without any income and there is no one to support us.

வசந்தகுமாரி

Mrs. NADESAN SIVAPAKIAM (39), S. Kathiravelu of Vasuki Vasam, Sandilipay.

My husband Gnanapiragasam Nadesan aged 41 years was a driver attached to the Home Finance Ltd., Jaffna.

My husband, children and I were living in a rented out house at the above address.

On 29.11.87 at about 7 a.m. two of my children and I left to the Market to purchase vegetables.

My husband and other two children remained at home.

At about 7.30 a.m. firing of gun shots were heard close to our house and the people of our locality started to flee from the market to safer places.

My 2 children and I too left the market and reached home at about 9 a.m.

To my surprise I found IPKF were in our compound and my husband was lying in a pool of blood.

My two children who were at the house were seated by the side of my fallen husband.

The children who joined me to the market and I were taken to our compound by the IPKF personnel and asked to sit along with my other two children.

An IPKF commander came to us and allowed me to give water to my husband.

While giving water my husband informed me that he was shot by the IPKF.

On the instructions of the IPKF commander my injured husband children and I were taken to Pandateruppu IPKF Camp and where my husband was treated at the camp.

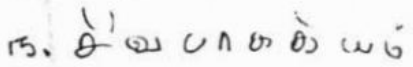
On the following morning we were taken to Jaffna in a truck and my injured husband was admitted to ward-6.

My husband succumbed to his injuries at the Jaffna Teaching Hospital on 30.11.87 at 12.10 p.m.

My children and I left the dead body at the General hospital, as we did not have money to perform his last rites.

I have 4 children by him and all are school going.

I have no other source of income or savings.



SELLATHURAI SIVASUBRAMANIAM (37) Sandilipay West.

My late father Kandiah Sellathurai aged 68 years was an in valid.

On 29.11.87 at about 8 a.m. I.P.K.F. advanced towards our village firing at random.

Fearing to remain at home my wife children and I fled to the Pillayar temple at Chankanai for refuge.

My late father remained at home.

My brother Navaratnam came to the Pillayar temple at Chankanai at 7 a.m. on 30.11.87 and informed me.

I.P.K.F. had advanced to our area at 10 a.m. on 29.11.87.

I.P.K.F. entered my house and sounds of firing were heard soon after.

When he went to my house after the I.P.K.F. had left he had found our father Aandiah Sellathurai dead with an injury on the right side of his chest.

My father's dead body was cremated in an adjoining compound at 2 p.m. on 30.11.87.

SINNATHAMY THANAPACKIYAM (48) Navakiri, Puttur West, Puttur.

The deceased person Perumal Sinathamby was my husband,

He was a Farmer.

On 30.11.87 at about 9.00 a.m. my husband left for his Farm which is situated at about half mile distance from our house.

As he did not return home I became highly worried.

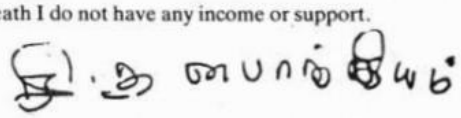
On the following day I was admitted at the Jaffna General Hospital due to high blood pressure.

On the seventh day of my husband's disappearance I was informed at the Hospital that my husband was killed in a shell blast on 30.11.87 near his farm and that his body was found in a decomposed state by his brother.

I also learned that his remains were cremated at Thoppu Cemetery, Atchuvely.

I do not have any children.

After my husband's death I do not have any income or support.



BALASINGHAM KAMALADEVI (30), Gandhiji Veethy, Kokuvil West, Kokuvil.

The deceased Nagamuthu Rasam, aged 76 years was my mother-in-law being my husband's mother.

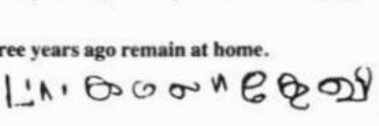
Due to the intensive military operation at our area we went to Poonahari for safety leaving my mother-in-law at our residence at Kokuvil.

Only after we returned home from Poonahari during the latter part of November, I came to know about my mother-in-law's death.

I learned that she was killed during a shell blast at Kokuvil.

I came to know that her body was disposed by some persons immediately afterwards.

My husband who became blind three years ago remain at home.



Sunil Bhagawat

RAPED

KONDAVIL WEST,
KONDAVIL.

30th November, 1987.

The Major,
I.P.K.Force
Kondavil West,
KONDAVIL.

Sir,

IMPROPER BEHAVIOUR OF SOME MEMBERS OF THE INDIAN PEACE KEEPING FORCE AT KONDAVIL WEST

We thank you for assuring us that innocent civilians will not be harassed by the peace Keeping Force. However, it appears that Superior Officers of the Peace Keeping Force are not aware of the attro cities that are being commited by some of the Jawans of the Peace Keeping Force. We like to report some incidents in the hope that you will take effective measures to prevent a recurrence of similar incidents as such incidents will certainly not help to win the hearts minds of the people of the area.

(I) On the 27th of this month between 8 A.M. – 10 A.M. two Jawans posted at the K.K.S. Road Muthaddu Madam Lane Lane Junction entered the house of Mr. and Mrs. R. Sukumaran at Muthaddu Madam Lane. They tied up and assaulted the husband. They then intimidated the wife S. Satkunathevy, silenced her and raped her. The neighbours went to the sence later and consoled the family.

(II) On the 26th of this month while the I.P.K.F. was going on, a group of Jawans entered the house of Mrs. G. Selvanayagam between 9 A.M. & 10 A.M. and raped her.

These incidents have driven fear into the minds of the people of the area and some of them are fleeing from the area.

We welcomed the Indian Peace Keeping Force in the hope that your presence here will put an end to the tyranny of the Ceylon Army and the hardships that the people had to undergo in the hands of the Ceylon Army. But we are disappointed and saddened that in 50 days of action by the Peace Keeping Force the people here have suffered much more hardships and have lost many of their kith and kins and their property. We lived in temples and schools without food and sanitation for several days and when we returned to our house in the hope of living in security we are being harassed in the manner reported above by some Peace Keeping Personnal. We have not undergone such indignities even in the hands of the Ceylon Armed Force. We are confident that you as a Superior and understanding Officer will pursue this matter and prevent a recurrence of such incidents.

Yours truly,
Signed - 47 persons

THE HINDU

87 November

Charge against IPKF 'motivated'

TIRUCHI, Nov 29.

The Union Minister of State for Home, Mr. P. Chidambaram, today urged the people to appreciate the good intentions of the Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, in signing the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement which only demonstrated his concern to protect and safeguard the interests of the Sri Lankan Tamils.

Addressing a public meeting organised by the Congress (I) at the Town hall here Mr. Chidambaram explained various aspects relating to the accord. The refusal of the Sinhalese to recognise the Sri Lanka Tamils was the main reason for the ethnic animosity, he said. Mr. Chidambaram said that right from the beginning India was opposed to a separate Eelam and any accord with Sri Lanka was possible minus Eelam as a seperate entity. This was made clear to the leaders of the Tamil militant groups, including the LTTE leader, Mr. V. Prabakaran.

Mr. Chidambaram wondered why Mr. Prabakaran swore by military confrontation and was not prepared to come to the democratic stream.

The vituperative attack against the Indian Peace Keeping Force by the DK, DMK and other vested interests was "mischievos". Allegations that the IPKF killed innocent Tamils and went on a looting and raping spree were all "motivated" to besmirch the image of the Indian Government, he said.

Mr. Chidambaram said he found that the people of Tamil Nadu were able to identify these "separatist elements" which wanting for an excuse to rebel at every opportunity against the Indian Government, had been exploiting in vain Mr. Prabakaran's intransigence for their political gains. These forces ultimately found that their efforts were now unproductive as the people of Tamil Nadu had been indifferent to all their calls for agitation against the IPKF role.

The IPKF was doing a humanitarian service in Sri Lanka, Mr. Chidambaram pointed out. Even while signing the accord, the Prime Minister had hinted that the process of implementation of the accord would have to undergo several tests. The ultimate aim was in the larger interests of all the Tamil groups and to usher in lasting peace on the island.

INDIAN EXPRESS

The LTTE is definitely a spent force.
–Lt Gen Depinder Singh

NEWS

LTTE leadership 'obdurate, selfish'

Express News Service

Bombay, Nov. 27: A comparison of the Indian peacekeeping force (IPKF) role in Sri Lanka with the United States involvement in Vietnam was "irrelevant," according to Lt. Gen Depinder Singh, the General-Officer-Commanding in Chief, Southern Command.

Asked how the Indian soldier viewed his role in Lanka, the General, who is incharge of the operation in Sri Lanka said, "The Indian soldier is paid to obey orders. He is not in the US ethos where the GIs questioned the policy."

As to how long the IPKF was likely to remain in Sri Lanka, the General said he would not like to speculate.

Elaborating as to why it took so long to gain control of Jaffna, he said that the unfamiliar terrain was one reason for slowing down the operation. The LTTE on the other hand were fighting in familiar landscapes.

Moreover, the LTTE were a motivated lot, as the Indian army had found out during the two months of interaction before the fighting broke out. They had training pamphlets from West European countries which had been translated into Tamil, the General revealed. Their weapons were mainly of Chinese make and there was evidence of their links with the PLO also. Ironically, at the same time the role of Israel in arming and training the LTTE was also evident, the army commander said.

The General who was in the city for the prize distribution ceremony of the southern command polo cup, said that the strength of the LTTE was the possession of Jaffna town, which created the impression that they were a state within a state.

Asked whether Jaffna was under full control of the IPKP he said since the public was also there, the IPKF could not prevent the odd sniper or the occasional grenade blast or some booby traps. He said it was difficult, to differentiate between the general public and an LTTE man, as the latter did not have a uniform and could easily merge with the crowd.

He refuted the allegation that helicopter gunships were being used against civilians, and said in a shocked tone, "How can we do a thing like that against civilians." He however, admitted that some civilians may have been killed by accident.

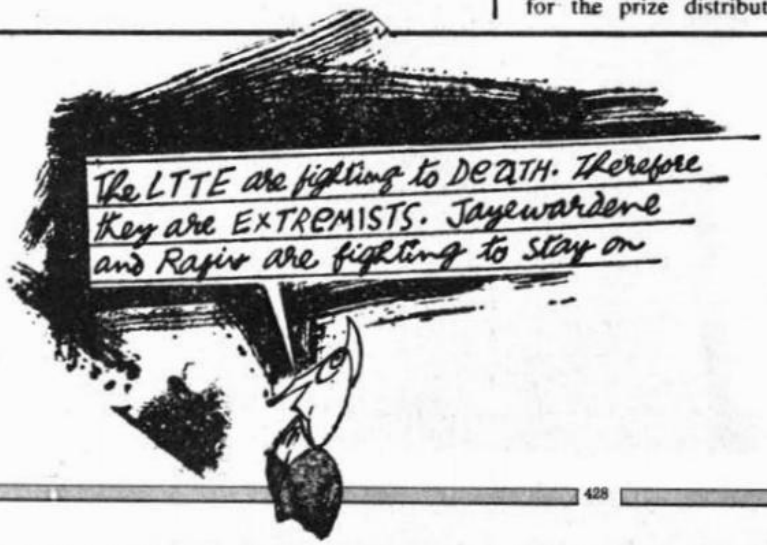
He was optimistic that the latest package offered to the LTTE rank and file would be accepted. The package aimed at assuring the LTTE personnel, who wanted to surrender, that they would be protected.

The General was critical of the LTTE leadership, which he said was "obdurate and selfish," because they were coming in the way of the peace process.

He denied reports that the casualty figures among the IPKF were higher than the official figures and insisted that the official figures were "the God's own truth."

At the beginning of the operations, the IPKF numbered just about 800 to 1,000 men.

O.V. Vijayan, The Statesman, 18.11.87.



REPORT

What Price Peace?

A vote for local Tamil rule follows a bloody bombing

"The peace that is brought in by an alien conqueror does not provide the restful qualities of the real article," Sri Lankan Prime Minister Ranasinghe Premadasa told a packed Parliament in Colombo last week. The quote, taken from Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, had a ring of irony. And truth. Nehru was referring to Britain, which ruled a racially and religiously divided India for a century and a half, until 1947. Premadasa was alluding in turn to India, which last July joined Sri Lanka in signing an agreement aimed at ending a four-year battle by the island's Tamil separatists for an independent homeland. Since that time India has discovered how difficult it is to be a guarantor of peace in a foreign land.

Survivor: a victim of the explosion receives aid in Colombo

That point came home with deadly force last week when a bomb, probably planted in a moving bus, exploded in Colombo's bustling Maradana commercial district. The toll: 28 dead and 104 injured. The blast damaged 21 vehicles, broke the windows of nearby buildings and strewed chunks of human flesh up to 20 yards away. "It was terrible," said a bystander. "There were parts of people and blood all over the place."

The terrorist attack came on the eve of a debate in the Sri Lankan Parliament on two bills that would provide for provincial councils in the predominantly Tamil areas of the north and east, thus giving them a measure of self-government. The primary suspects were the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. But authorities did not rule out the Janatha Vimukti Peramuna, a militant band drawn from the ethnic Sinhalese majority. The J.V.P. opposes Tamil autonomy as well as what it perceives as Indian encroachment on Sri Lankan sovereignty. Although the bombing victims were mostly Sinhalese, the J.V.P. may have cynically calculated that the Tamils would be blamed, thus provoking a well-timed backlash against the parliamentary bills.

Security was unusually tight the next day as phalanxes of rifle-wielding troops lined the road leading up to Parliament. Sinhalese extremists had threatened legislators from Sri Lankan President Junius R. Jayewardene's ruling United National Party with death if they voted for even a limited measure of Tamil autonomy. Not that the President's forces were unanimous in supporting the bills. Agriculture Minister Gamani Jayasuriya angrily resigned from the Cabinet after he was prevented from taking part in the debate because of his opposition to the proposals. By week's end, however, the bills passed by a vote of 138 to 11.

As the legislators met, Sinhalese militants, suspected of being members of the J.V.P., damaged power and telecommunications installations, rail lines and state buildings. These acts of sabotage, coupled with student demonstrations and hunger strikes, convinced the government that the Sinhalese protests could be violent and long lasting. Rather than fight two separate civil insurgencies, Colombo late last week sent feelers to the J.V.P. offering to lift an official ban on the outlawed group in exchange for a renunciation of violence.

Ironically, even moderate Tamils do not approve of the laws that Jayewardene's supporters risked their lives to pass. As for the militant Tigers, their spokesmen did not bother to comment on the new laws. "They will make the bills irrelevant," predicted a Tamil lawyer in Colombo who feels the Tigers have not given up their dream of a separate state. In effect, the Tigers wield a veto over the whole peace process: elections to the newly established provincial councils cannot take place until they voluntarily surrender their weapons or are disarmed by Indian troops, neither of which appears imminent. —*By Susan Tifft. Reported by Qadri Ismail/Colombo* NOVEMBER 23, 198

Rajinder Puri, The Statesman, 13.11.87.

V PRABHAKARAN

A Cornered Tiger

A profile of Velupillai Prabhakaran, Supreme Commander of the LTTE

PROFILE

ILLUSTRATION BY RAM KRISHNA SALVI

The IPKF may well use Baroness Orczy's doggerel on the *Scarlet Pimpernel* in referring to the LTTE chief: "We seek him here, we seek him there. Is he in heaven? Is he in hell? That damned elusive Velupillai Prabhakaran."

Jaffna, the stronghold of the LTTE, has fallen to the IPKF but Prabhakaran eludes all attempts to capture him. Some reports say that Prabhakaran was last seen at Point Pedro, others say that he has shifted base to the eastern sector. But by all accounts, he is still alive and directing the LTTE's armed resistance to the IPKF.

In the third week of October, Indian soldiers spotted a leopard which they shot dead. The animal had a collar which indicated that it was a pet, most probably Prabhakaran's. The pet leopard, a reputation as an ace sharpshooter and an image as a ruthless military tactician, have all made Prabhakaran a cult figure for Sri Lankan Tamils. Prabhakaran carries a price of Rs 1 million on his head but even IPKF officers say that Prabhakaran will never be captured alive, that he would prefer to swallow a cyanide pill rather than surrender.

Prabhakaran has kept away from the media and not much is known about his personal life. He was born on November 26, 1954 in the coastal town of Valvettiturai in Jaffna which was later to become the nursery of the Tamil militant movement. His father, Velupillai was a land development officer. The anti-Tamil violence of 1956 affected him deeply. Prabhakaran himself recalls an incident in Panatura, Colombo, in which a Brahmin priest was burnt alive by Sinhalese mobs.

"I was the youngest child in my family. So everyone petted me and spoilt me a lot. I was not allowed to go out of the house very often so I spent a lot of time reading books. When I read about revolutionaries and when I saw the oppression of my people all around me, I could not help but be inspired by ideas of revolution," Prabhakaran says explaining his attraction to revolution at an early age. His tuition master V Navaratnam played an important role in shaping his views. Navaratnam recently quit the Federal Party and the younger members in the party followed suit. Recalls Prabhakaran, "He used to talk about various world movements, about how nothing can be accomplished by parliamentary means." Prabhakaran was deeply impressed. The seeds of revolution had been sown.

I was not allowed to go out of the house very often so I spent a lot of time reading books. When I read about revolutionaries and when I saw the oppression of my people all around me, I could not help but be inspired by ideas of revolution.

Soon after, Prabhakaran — hardly into his teens — dropped out of school like countless young boys who now make up the LTTE cadre. Popularly known as "thambi" (younger brother), he soon came to symbolise the aspirations of the Tamil youth who had become disenchanted with the non-violent forms of struggle for the rights of Tamils. When only 18, Prabhakaran founded the "Tiger" movement which was initially called the "Tamil New Tigers" (TNT). On May 5, 1976 it was renamed "Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam" (LTTE).

Associates say that even at that young age, Prabhakaran displayed astute military acumen and organisational skills. Structured as a disciplined urban guerilla force, the LTTE hit the headlines with the assassination of the Jaffna mayor and Sri Lanka Freedom Party activist Alfred Duraippa. The activities of the militants continued and soon the LTTE became the most feared underground organisation. Prabhakaran personally took part in the LTTE ambush of a Sri Lankan military convoy to Jaffna on July 23, 1983 — the incident that was the cause of a wave of anti-Tamil violence.

Much of the success of the LTTE in carving a name for itself in Jaffna and in exterminating all other rival groups stems from the fact that Prabhakaran exercises tight and ruthless control over the cadre. Until recently, the cadres were not allowed to marry and even now drinking and smoking are strictly prohibited. Every member carries a cyanide capsule around his neck at all times.

In 1984, Prabhakaran married Madhivadhan. They have a son, Charles Antony, named after one of his trusted lieutenants, who was killed in the 1983 ambush. Prabhakaran also has a daughter, Dwarka. His wife and children are currently holed up in Kadaithivu Island, closely watched by the IPKF, in case Prabhakaran attempts to contact them.

Prabhakaran is fluent in Tamil but knows very little English. He is a self-taught sharpshooter and is said to be adept at handling different weapons. He has two sisters and a brother.

Photographs of Prabhakaran show him sitting beside photographs of Lenin and Che Guevara, an alert leopard by his side. It remains to be seen whether the IPKF has any more success than the Sri Lankan army in trapping the biggest tiger of them all.

NOVEMBER 16-30, 1987

Lalita Dileep

CONFRONTATION

2

COLOMBO, Nov. 2.

Five Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) soldiers were killed in a powerful landmine explosion in Sri Lanka today on the Mankulam — Mullaitivu Road, 10 km from the northern district town of Mullaitivu.

An Indian High Commission spokesman said three soldiers were seriously injured

Achuveli captured: The IPKF today captured Achuveli, an LTTE stronghold about 20 km from Jaffna, the Sri Lankan national news agency, Lankapuvath, said

After the capture of Achuveli, the IPKF was now moving towards Vadamarachi, one of the LTTE bastions which came under heavy attack during the May offensive of the Sri Lankan forces, the news agency added. — PTI

IPKF fires at civilians who went to buy their provisions at Kaithady. Many civilians killed.

The famous Watrapalai Amman Temple hit by IPKF mortar fire. 6 civilians killed and over 15 injured.

3

Indian para-commandos today raided an area near Moolai in the western part of Jaffna peninsula, killing an estimated 25 LTTE personnel and blowing up a van carrying ammunition as well as caches captured by them. The commandos landed at the area at 3 a.m. today and moved a couple of kilometres inland to engage the LTTE which was entrenched near Moolai town.

The Indian Peace Keeping Force believes that a disused hospital near the town is being used by the LTTE as its new headquarters. The area is being heavily defended by rings of heavily fortified bunkers and the IPKF engaged the ones in the north-westen approach. The para-commando force captured a .50 calibre heavy machine gun and two general purpose machine guns while destroying the ammunition since it was too difficult to carry it away. The force was able to exfiltrate from the scene of action by 7 a.m. The action was supported by Akbar helicopter gunships which engaged the LTTE bunkers and inflicted heavy damage.

Six LTTE vans destroyed: Helicopter gunships patrolling the Point Pedro — Vadamarachchi and the Moolai-Telliapali roads destroyed six vans flying the LTTE flags. The IPKF lost two infantry combat vehicles in the Mullaitivu area when they were blown up by mines emplaced by the LTTE and five IPKF personnel died in this action. The IPKF is now fanning out to establish its presence in the rest of the Jaffna peninsula and the rest of the Northern province. Today, the IPKF secured Chempianpatu, Vadamarachchi and Thondamannaru areas and established a stronger presence in Mannar, Kilinochchi and Vavunia.

IPKF engineers were busy repairing the damage caused by the LTTE to the Chempianpatu causeway. These areas had been held by small IPKF formations and now the effort is on to prevent the LTTE from consolidating itself in these areas after its setback in Jaffna city.

Turning to small unit action: The force will now concentrate on small unit action such as ambushes and road-blocks combined with the use of helicopter gunships to deny the LTTE freedom of movement on the roads of the peninsula. These actions are designed to prevent the LTTE from being able to shift its forces from one place to another easily.

IPKF sources feel that the LTTE is now heavily concentrated in the western part of the Jaffna peninsula, notably the Moolai area. They also feel that the LTTE now plans to step up its actions in the Eastern Province as well. Intelligence reports indicate that a shipment of arms and ammunition has been received by LTTE personnel in the Batticaloa area through transhipment in small boats from a larger vessel that slipped through the blockade. They feel that the actions may include attacks on civilians, notably Muslims and Sinhalas as well as attacks on buses, mining of roads, etc.

Mahatiya may still be around: While the IPKF does not like to speculate on the fate of the top LTTE leadership, they feel that the LTTE number 2, Mahatiya, may still be around and in fact, be in charge of the western peninsula. In fact, the IPKF has picked up an intercept of a voice purporting to be that of Mahatiya and reassuring the LTTE cadres that he was still alive. They feel that the high LTTE official reported killed in Chavakacheri area may in fact have been Mr. Yogi, the head of the political wing of the LTTE. They indicate that the whereabouts of Mr. Prabakaran are still unknown though wireless intercepts have picked up pre-recorded messages from him refuting the IPKF appeals broadcast through pamphlets. They deduce that this may be a consequence of a feeling in the LTTE leadership that their popular support was in danger of slipping.

Stray cases of sniping: Stray cases of sniping are still there in Jaffna city though life is returning to normal. From tomorrow onwards, Brig. Kahlon of the IPKF will begin operating as the Town Commissioner from the Residency building to coordinate the relief and rehabilitation measures. The Nallur Kandaswamy temple has been cleared of 70 per cent of the refugees who had been sheltered there and the others emerging are being screened by the IPKF personnel.

LTTE's fighting potential: IPKF sources say that the LTTE's fighting potential is still considerable. They say that proportionately fewer weapons have been recovered compared to the ammunition caches discovered. This implies that LTTE cadres who may have merged with the civilian population still have arms and smaller caches of ammunition to continue to operate as a fighting force. With regard to the talk of ceasefire, they say that the factual position is that it is the LTTE which is firing at the IPKF and so 'ceasefire' can be one in which the LTTE stops firing at the IPKF. They assert that it would be dangerous at this stage to permit a

(Operation Pawan)

CIVILIANS □ KILLED

MANIPAY	
M. Ambalabanar	T. Velan
R. Sritharan	*NEERVELY*
MALLAKAM	S. Rajathurai
Kathiramalainathan	S. Subramanium
Govindasamy	S. Thangaratnam
Santhkumar	S. Subramanium
T. Subramaniam	S. Rajadurai
T. Thangammah	*NALLUR*
P. Akila	M. Arunothayan
S. Santha	M. Rajitha
K. Sothinathan	J. Kannipillai
R. Jeyanthy	R. Sathiyabama
N. Sellathurai	Muthiah
Sellappah	S. Mariathas
K. Kandasamy	*NAVANTHURAI*
Velautham Akila	Marusalne
Robert Nixon	Lucas
K. Pathmanathan	M. Thiravium
S. Rathiaf	Vitalis Nelson
I. Sritharan	A. Jeyakumar
I. Makenthiran	A. Soosaipillai
N. Sellaih	S. Benedict
R. Nahuleswaran	A. Premachanthar
S. Thrunalingam	Sothylingam
V. Nagarajah	S. Annammah
S. Thambirajah	S. Jeganathan
T. Sriparan	K. Thangarasa
S. Rathinam	I. Vamadevan
S. Jothirajah	T. Kanthiyah
R. Selvarajah	S. Rajevan
K. Paikianathan	T. Nadarajah
M. Manaharan	K. Jesuthasan
R. Thanabalasingam	Thangaiah
V. Aiyathurai	S. Thambirajah

'freeze' in the situation — cease-fire or no cease-fire. Under all circumstances, the IPKF ought to be permitted to continue its process of disarming the LTTE while retaining the option of firing back should the LTTE fire at them.

On the 3rd November 87, there was a landing of Indian soldiers at Ponnalai. There was also a helicopter attack the same day. The famous Ponnalai Krishna Temple was one of those places attacked. The refugees there were forced to leave the place.

4

What was the meaning of the crippling blow to the LTTE, mentioned by reports from Jaffna today or of the Sri Lankan President, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene's assessment that the LTTE had almost been crushed?

This became clear today from the figures of its casualties — 800 killed, 400 apprehended by the IPKF or surrendered to it. The IPKF losses were as follows: — 223 killed, 785 injured and 35 missing. Nearly 40 per cent of the injured, it was stated, had been discharged from hospitals and had either resumed duty or were in the process of doing so.

On the 4th November 87, there was heavy attack by bombers and helicopters on Moolai Hospital and places around were heavily damaged.

5

Reports reaching here confirm that the LTTE leader, Mr. V. Prabakaran was injured in the leg by a shrapnel during the IPKF operations in Chavakacheri town, east of Jaffna, on October 28-29. Mr. Prabakaran was said to have personally conducted the operations from an isolated, old building in the town which was being used as the LTTE headquarters. Two of his aides were killed and one of them has been identified as Mohanraj from Mannar.

Two battalions of the Madras Regiment had been deployed to secure the building. They had encountered so much of intensive fire from the building that the IPKF had to send helicopters on strafing missions. In all, 27 bodies of the LTTE men were recovered from the building and the petrol pump adjacent to it after the operations.

An External Affairs Ministry spokesman said today that the IPKF had unearthed LTTE arms dumps near the Nallur Kandasamy temple and in Koppai North. In the last 24 hours, six LTTE men were killed and six others apprehended, taking the LTTE toll to 773 killed. One IPKF jawan was killed and four others were injured in the 24-hour period.

The LTTE was resorting to abduction, extortion and murder of prominent members of the local citizens councils to terrorise the populace nd deter them from helping the IPKF. On Novebber 3, it kidnapped Mr. Iliyathan Mahalingam, Principal of the Pudur Mahavidyalaya and killed him in a jungle near Kalladi.

In the Eastern Province, the LTTE militants have stepped up intimidation and coercion by demanding taxes from the local fishermen. They have also threatened businessmen and prominent citizens with death if they did not pay them money. It may be recalled that the September 12-13 massacre by the LTTE in the Eastern province occurred when the local citizens objected to the illegal tax collection.

On the 5th November 87, too, there was shell attack by artillery and by helicopters. As the result of the attack, besides causing sacrileges to the same Ponnalai Krishnan Temple, the Moolai Teaching Hospital facilities have been deprived to the urgent section of the population of the area. This has affected the victims of the air and shell attacks and now the people have no hospital to go to. There were cases of people dying in the absence of medical aid. Five people have died and several injured because of the attack. A number of houses too have been destroyed.

Fourteen year old girl raped by IPKF at Batticoloa. Many girls humiliated.

6

COLOMBO, Nov. 6.

One soldier of the Indian Peace-Keeping Force (IPKF) was killed and four wounded in an LTTE planted land-mine explosion today at Sambaltivu in eastern Trincomalee district, official sources here said.

7

New Delhi, Nov. 7 (PTI): In an effort to strike terror, Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) militants have started abducting and killing civilians in eastern Jaffna, an official spokesman said here on Saturday.

Briefing newsmen on the incidents, the spokesman said in Muttur area, LTTE militants killed two civilians and abducted two on Friday. In Batticaloa, two civilians were abducted and one of them, Mr. Sathyunam, was killed by LTTE men and his body tied to a lamp post.

The spokesman said the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) was continuing vigorous search operations in Jaffna and other sectors to unearth arms caches.

Eleven LTTE militants were killed in an encounter with the IPKF in Kankesanthurai on Friday. Parts of mortar bombs and equipment for making improvised explosive devices were recovered from them.

IPKF goes on rampage at Mankollai, Kankesanthurai. Many civilians killed and females raped. 11 bodies of civilians identified. 6 girls found unconsious after being raped. 6 people from one family are reported missing.

IPKF made 25 people, including old people, women and children, stand nude in the Chunnagam Market square.

IPKF went on a patrol using females as human sheilds.

Large scale raping going on in Batticoloa.

8

NEW DELHI, Nov. 8.

While the LTTE militants were putting up little resistance in their strongholds in the Vadamarachchi area which have been 'secured' by the IPKF yesterday, they attempted to oppose an IPKF search operation at Manipai, near Jaffna suffering heavy casualties. An External Affairs Ministry spokesman said here that 26 LTTE cadres were killed in the operation while seven IPKF personnel were wounded. One IPKF soldier was killed but the spokesman did not specify the place.

The IPKF is now in full control of Nelliyandi, Point Pedro, Moolai, Manipai, Mannar, Karainagar and Kaytes Island. The LTTE has been resorting to some isolated firing in Mullaitivu where mopping up operations were on.

In a search operation in Aluvankerni in the Batticaloa sector, three LTTE hardcore militants were captured and one carbine, one hand grenade and a boat with a 8 horsepower outboard motor were recovered from them.

The spokesman said it appeared now that the LTTE had lost the ability to put up an organised resistance to the IPKF. Reports indicated that the LTTE was losing the sympathy of the local populace as its cadres could barely hide in any one place for more than a few hours. Also, more and more information was coming in from the local citizens on LTTE activities especially their mine laying operations.

Meanwhile, LTTE tactics have become more desperate in Jaffna where it has been trying to sabotage the IPKF's relief measures. Yesterday the LTTE set ablaze one Red Cross godown, destroying a large quantity of relief supplies, including medicines. One Red Cross jeep plying from Kankesanthurai to Tellipalli was hijacked by the militants.

9

NEW DELHI, Nov. 9.

Eighteen LTTE cadres were killed, including 12 in Manipai, in northern Sri Lanka in the past 24 hours as operations by the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) to disarm LTTE militants continued.

An official spokesman said 14 suspected LTTE men were apprehended, one IPKF personnel was killed and 10 wounded.

In Chavakacheri, the IPKF recovered one 160 mm mortar, five 120 mm mortar barrels, one 160 mm mortar barrel, 15 claymore mines and three improvised devices, he said.

According to reports received here, two LTTE militants were killed at Tannyiutu, south of Mullaitivu. One hardcore militant, Suman Anton was killed yesterday at Velvetiturai. Ten LTTE suspects were held at Sittandi.

According to intelligence reports, one LTTE leader, Pasilan, along with his lieutenant, Kalidas, was killed at Mullaitivu.

The spokesman said at a meeting at Puttur, near Jaffna, 200 militants held a meeting where a majority favoured surrendering their arms, according to intelligence reports. The LTTE cadres are stated to be holding a series of such meetings.

Reports said the civilian population at the LTTE leader, Mr. V. Prabhakaran's birth place, Vadamarchchi, distributed fruits, sweets and cigarettes and brought these to the IPKF camp.

LTTE has reportedly launched a disinformation campaign against the "atrocities" by the IPKF by sending telegrams, mainly from London, to the U.N., the western countries and Third World nations. — UNI

Three people, Mr. Kunam (50), Mrs. Kunam (45) and Thangaluxmy (27) were injured when an IPKF mortar shell hit a temple where refugees were staying at Sandilipay. The 3 injured people, Mr. Pararajasingam (Head Teacher) and his driver who were taking the injured to Jaffna hospital in car flying a white flag were shot dead by the IPKF at Navaly. The car was also burnt with bodies still inside.

Thousands of IPKF personal and Sri Lankan Police Commandos moved towards Mandoor from Batticaloa and Valaichenai using 300 civilians as human shields. The IPKF shot dead 50 civilians of their human shield and burn 75 houses belonging to Tamils at Mandoor.

3 civilians were killed and 15 were injured due to ariel bombardment at the Kokuvil Ramakrishna School refugee camp.

10

NEW DELHI, Nov. 10.

Twenty Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) men were killed in an exchange of fire with the Indian Peace Keeping Force at Anakoddai, 10 km southwest of Jaffna last night, an official spokesman said here today.

The firing, which resulted from an attack by LTTE on an IPKF patrol, left one Indian soldier dead and three wounded.

In the past 24 hours, the IPKF captured a large quantity of ammunition and explosives at Chavakcheri, besides one 150 mm mortar, one three-inch mortar, 10 improvised mortar barrels and fourteen 60 mm mortar bombs the spokesman said. — UNI

Many civilians killed at Puthukudiyirupu due to aerial bombardment on residential areas.

2 civilians killed when the IPKF opened fire at a civilian van between Mulagavil and Velankulam in the Mannar District.

25 civilians including women and children brutally murdered by Sri Lankan Security Personnel at Batticoloa.

11

Tamil militants killed 15 Sinhalese fishermen and wounded two others at Batticaloa, about 230 km from here, an Associated Press report said.

The victims were shot dead when they went to sell their catch at a village jetty.

The IPKF also came under heavy firing at Thavady and at Kopay south yesterday in the peninsula. The Indian troops retaliated killing three militants at Kopay south. Seven Indian soldiers were injured

(Operation Pawan)

CIVILIANS □ KILLED

THAVADY	K. Shanmuganathan
K. Kunam	S. Suntharalingam
P. Kanagasingam	Suntharalingam
P. Manonmany	K. Appiah
P. Malini	K. Sellathurai
S. Nesarasa	K. Rasiah
K. Vadivelu	R. Selvaratnam
TIRUNELVELI	S. Kandiah
R. Luxman	T. Valliammai
S. Thanikasar	S. Navaratnam
N. Rasaratnam	S. Pushpam
T. Thangamany	G. Ramasamy
K. Gunaratnam	S. Nadarajah
K. Puwaneswaary	K. Annammah
S. Ramalingam	S. Veeran
V. Paramarasa	K. Ramasamy
S. Wigneswaran	M. Navaratnam
N. Annammah	T. Ketheeswaran
S. Sivasubramaniam	T. Mohankumar
P. Thevy	P. Rasenthiram
P. Angaramoorthy	S. Sellathurai
S. Sabaratnam	G. Gnanamuthu
N. Thanabalasingam	S. Mohanachandran
R. Tharumalingam	T. Rasammah
P. Suntharam	S. Kandasamy
S. Jeyakumar	S. Jeyakumaran
S. Sinnathamby	V. Santhalingam
S. Sathasivam	S. Gunaratnam
V. Sinnah	G. Valliammai
P. Sivapatham	*TELLIPALAI*
S.O.K. Muthaliyar	V. Santhalingam
K. Maheswaran	P. Muthuthamby
Maheswaran	Sivasothy
A. Sivaguru	Y. Geethanjali

in the encounters.

Meanwhile, according to reliable reports received here, "Ousai," one of the first 10 in the LTTE hierarchy, was killed on November 7 during the IPKF operations in the Vadamarachi area.

2 IPKF SOLDIERS KILLED: Three LTTE men and two Indian soldiers, including a junior commissioned officer, were killed and 10 members of the Indian Peace-Keeping Force wounded during the past 24 hours in the battle-torn Jaffna peninsula and eastern Batticaloa.

On the 11th November 87, fifteen people were killed and 25 seriously injured at Nedunkerni when a helicopter gunship attacked a civilian target. A hospital of the area was also damaged. Patients in the hospital also were injured.

12

Colombo, Nov. 12 (PTI): Twentyfive civilians were killed on Thursday in a big landmine explosion at Chettikulam, in Sri Lanka's northern province in Mannar district, according to top Sri Lankan security sources.

The sources said the civilians were travelling in a van, three miles off Chettikulam, when the landmine planted allegedly by the LTTE "terrorists" exploded killing the civilians.

According to unconfirmed sources, the LTTE claimed that the members of its rival militant group, PLOTE were travelling in the van.

LTTE men killed: Thirteen LTTE men and two Indian soldiers were killed in Jaffna in the last 24 hours as the IPKF continued its operations to disarm the Tigers, the External Affairs Ministry spokesman told reporters in Delhi, on Thursday.

Ten other Indian soldiers were wounded in the operations and 23 LTTE members were apprehended by IPKF, the spokesman added.

13

LTTE leader 'Suren' was killed and three hardcore militants were captured in the northern Mannar region during search and combing operations, the official added.

He said of the 25 killed in a landmine explosion at Chettikulam in Mannar district on Thursday, 13 were identifed as Tamil militants, belonging to PLOTE, and 12 civilians.

The 'Tigers' lost 13 of its men as the IPKF continued its mopping up operation in the Jaffna peninsula, the State-owned Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation (SLBC) said in its evening bulletin on Friday.

Twenty-three militants were captured by the IPKF which lost two of its soldiers, the bulletin added. It however, did not mention when the militants were killed.

Meanwhile, a senior official of the Indian High Commission told newsmen that the first civil mail from Jaffna reached Colombo on Friday by air. Mail had remained suspended in the wake of IPKF operation.

14

3 LTTE MEN KILLED: Three LTTE militants were killed while laying mines in the Konduvil area of Jaffna on Friday while two surrendered to the IPKF in the Kachevi residency area.

An External Affairs Ministry spokesman said in New Delhi today five militants were apprehended by the IPKF during the past 24 hrs.

He said an IPKF patrol was ambushed by the LTTE in Nedunkeni in the Vawaniya sector, resulting in light casualties on both sides.

15

Twentyseven persons were killed and 20 injured today in a clash between Tamil guerillas and Indian Peace Keeping Force in the north of Sri Lanka, official sources said.

Most of the casualties were said to be among the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

Independent sources said an unspecified number of civilians were killed in the fighting, which took place in Vandaramollai, about 15 km west of the town of Batticaloa.

In other incidents, four LTTE men were killed in a landmine explosion near a refugee camp at Vavuniya in the north and 10 LTTE suspects were arrested in the Jaffna region, State radio said.

Eats cyanide: Indran (30), believed to be the political adviser for the LTTE in Batticaloa, killed himself by taking cyanide when he was apprehended by the Ampara police on Saturday, ENS adds.

Indran and his woman companion had been arrested at Arantha-

CHOPRA ADMITS

The following piece of secret information *(case file No:5301/1/G dated 14.11.87)* although received here late, confirms the atrocities committed by the IPKF during *operation Pawan in* Jaffna:

"On taking over area Urumpirai, Bus Stand area and Thirunelvely East, it is observed that there has been systematic destruction, plundering of each and every house and shop - as for your information, please - Capt. S.S.Chopra."

lawa

The woman was brought to Colombo under heavy security for questioning.

A lady was raped in front of her daughter at Arivalai.

2 people Thagarajah (27) qnd Sinnakanu (80) who was staying at the Urelu Amman Temple shot dead by IPKF.

A 16 year old boy was tortured to death Kommanthurai, Batticoloa.

3 people shot dead at Eravur by the IPKF.

Theivanayagam (58) was hit to death and 400 houses belonging to Tamils were burnt by the IPKF at Vandarumoolai in Batticaloa. 3 shops and about 200 houses were looted by the IPKF, 15 houses were badly damaged due to bombardment by helicopters.

6 Tamil speaking Muslim girls raped by the IPKF.

2 girls raped at Vandarumoolai and Uppodai.

The people of Vandarumoolai, Marugaiyadi, Sengalady, Kommanthurai and Sithandy have left their houses and have taken refuge in Temples and Schools.

16

Express News Service

Colombo, Nov. 16: Thirty LTTE cadres were reported killed in four separate engagements yesterday in the Batticaloa district. According to reports from Batticaloa, the LTTE had ambushed an IPKF column going from Batticaloa to meet up with a column coming from Trincomalee. The road from Batticaloa to Vallaichenai being usually mined, the IPKF was on a foot patrol when LTTE men opened fire.

Sixty IPKF personnel are believed to have been injured in the engagements which began around 9.30 a.m. and continued till about four in the evening in the Sithandy, Morakotanchenai and Chenkaladi areas.

Unconfirmed reports said that a number of civilians were among the dead. A number of houses in the vicinity were reported destroyed. An LTTE leader from Vavuniya is reported to have been killed in the encounters, and Karuna and Agasthinan from Batticaloa seriously injured.

Seven militants were killed and at least 20 wounded when they engaged the peace force in skirmish in eastern Sri Lanka, military sources said on Monday, reports *Reuter*.

Three girls of the LTTE arrested by the IPKF are being raped at the Jaffna Hospital.

4 women were raped by IPKF at Chunnakam. 9 women including a pregnant lady and an unattained girl were raped by the IPKF at Kondavil, when they went to get their food provisions supplied by the IPKF.

A girl was raped repeatedly till she became unconscious at Kinniyadi, Valachenai. About 9 males arrested

One Tamil speaking Muslim died due to the indiscriminate shelling by the IPKF.

17

Colombo, Nov. 17 (UNI): Fifteen Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) men and two IPKF personnel were killed and an IPKF vehicle was destroyed during operations against the militant Tamils today.

An Indian High Commission spokesman said here that one jawan and one junior commissioned officer were killed in the peace-keeping operations today. The LTTE, however, suffered a crippling blow when the IPKF raided their "transport headquarters" and seized a large number of vehicles late yesterday.

20

COLOMBO, Nov. 20.

Militants of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam launched a series of attacks in Sri Lanka as they freed 18 Indian Peace Keeping Force soldiers held captive for more than a month in the North, military sources said on Friday.

At least four soldiers were killed and 11 wounded when the LTTE opened fire on an Indian supply convoy at Mulliyawalai, 100 km southeast of Jaffna on Thursday afternoon, the sources said. They also reported attacks against Sri Lankan police positions and clashes with Indian troops in the eastern districts of Batticaloa Amparai and Trincomalee.

LTTE guerillas launched a series of attacks as they freed the 18 soldiers, military sources said today, reports Reuter from Colombo.

At least four Indian soldiers were killed and 11 wounded when LTTE men opened fire on an Indian supply convoy in Mullaiyawalai, 100 km southeast of Jaffna yesterday afternoon.

The *Island* newspaper said at least four people were hacked to death in an attack on a Sinhalese area in Amparai. The dead were a 78-year-old man, his son and grandson and their neighbour a homeguard.

21

NEW DELHI, Nov. 21.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) today fired at an Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) patrol in Sri Lanka despite the unilateral 48-hour ceasefire announced by the Government of India beginning 0700 hrs this morning.

(Operation Pawan)

CIVILIANS □ KILLED

SUTHUMALAI	PANDERTHAIPPU
I. Arulaiah	S. Velautham
S. Annammah	H. Antonitta
I. Sivapalan	T. Jeyarajah
K. Mahadevan	S. Thiyageesan
T. Sellathurai	K. Ganeshalingam
M. Vaithalingam	T. Uruthirarajah
M. Vaithalingam	V. Pathmaranee
K. Nalliah	Srikandarajah
P. Thavarajah	Balachandran
N. Annaladchumy	K. Veerasingam
T. Selvarasa	M.K. Pathmanathan
A. Shanmugalingam	S. Hubert
S. Vigneswaran	A. Alex Jusin
S. Nandakumar	PUDUKUDUIRUPPU
S. Rasathurai	Mary Loyala
SANDILIPAY	V. Krishnamoorthy
G. Nadesu	K. Kandiah
Arumugam	R. Packianathan
Ranganathan	K. Pathmanathan
M. Pararajasingam	S. Sebamalai
S. Thanaladchumy	PULOLY
Thanabalasingam	T. Karunanantharajah
V. Swaminathan	A. Ravichandran
S. Rasalingam	A. Vigneswaramoorthy
T. Sritharan	URUMPIRAI
S. Paramasingam	N. Shanti
PANDERTHAIPPU	P. Navaratnam
S. Velautham	K. Kanagasingam
H.A. Arunthathy	V. Navartnam
T. Jeyarajah	S. Nadarajah
S. Thiyageesan	K.M. Thambian
K. Ganeshalingam	V. Navaratnam
T. Uruthirarajah	S. Velautham

An External Affairs spokesman said here tonight that the LTTE fired from a building at Saralai, near Chavakacheri, in the Jaffna peninsula despite being aware of the decision that the IPKF will not open fire on its own initiative. The IPKF patrol fired back.

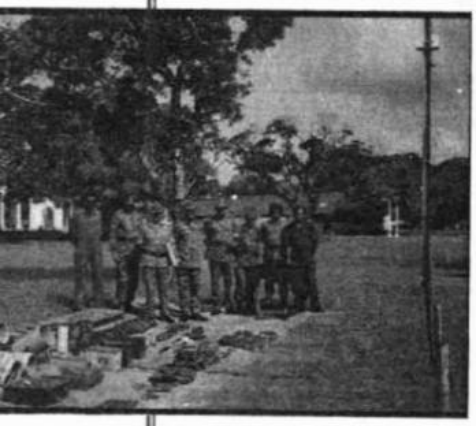
The LTTE men left behind a wounded member of the militant group while fleeing from the building.

The IPKF recovered one two-inch mortar and a rifle from the building, the spokesman said.

The LTTE had caused extensive damage to a transformer at the main power station at Chunakam. Engineers of the IPKF and the Tamil Nadu Electricity Board have been working continuously to restore power supply.

According to intelligence reports, the LTTE has asked its cadres to kill those people in Jaffna who assist and cooperate with the IPKF or do not give money to the LTTE when it so demands.

The IPKF is, however, striving to ensure that law-abiding citizens are given due protection, the reports said. — PTI



22

New Delhi, Nov. 22 (PTI): Over 100 members of the LTTE who were wounded in the Indian Peace Keeping Force operations in Jaffna were forced by the 'Tigers' leadership to swallow cyanide pills and die, according to realiable reports with the Government of India.

This was stated by the External Affairs Ministry spokesman on Sunday

IPKF violates the 48 hrs cease fire. Search operation by the IPKF at Parapukadanthan, Paraiyankulam and Aandaankulam in the Mannar district.

A man miraculously escaped after being shot at by an IPKF Patrol at Sithandy, Batticolao.

A civilian boat fired at by the IPKF at Thanichankerny

An LTTE base was rounded up by the IPKF at Thattamalai in Batticoloa at 07.30 hrs. 6 civilians were also arrested there.

A woman was raped by the IPKF at Neervely in Jaffna.

5 civilians including 2 Tamil speaking Muslims killed when the IPKF opened fire at Trincomalee.

23

Besides in the 48-hour "cease-fire" period, which ended at 7 a.m. today, the LTTE had killed two Tamils, one in Navatkuli village and another in Perumal Koil street in Jaffna, in order to intimidate the people and keep them from co-operating with the IPKF, the spokesman said.

A girl was shot dead on the 21st night by the IPKF at Annaikoddai, Jaffna after she resisted all attempts by the IPKF to molest her.

On the 21st, many women were raped by the IPKF at Uduvil. When the parents reported this to the Officer in charge, he said "Raping is a small incident, there is no need to report this".

24

UNI reports:

Heavy fighting broke out between the IPKF and the LTTE as the IPKF surrounded the large number of LTTE men in the jungles of Pulipanchakallu, 25 km north of eastern Batticaloa town.

Informed sources in Colombo said the IPKF surrounded the area following intelligence information that the LTTE was preparing for an ambush of an IPKF convoy, going on Kiran Road. The LTTE men, taken by surprise, were now trapped in the area and were trying to break out through the IPKF cordon, the sources added.

Sources in Batticaloa said helicopter gunships were giving cover to the IPKF. The area was uninhabited and a knowrl LTTE stronghold, they said.

The fighting is the first since the expiry of the 48-hour unilateral ceasefire observed by the IPKF. The ceasefire ended yesterday.

Many houses destroyed due to aerial bombardment on and around Kiran in Batticolao district.

More than 5000 people vacated the villages of Kiran Santhivelly, Koorakallimedu, and Kinniyadi due to fear.

20 women 5 from Puttur and 15 from Vadarawathai were raped by IPKF who were camped at Somiaskanda College, Puttur.

25

COLOMBO, Nov. 25:

At least eight LTTE militants and one Indian soldier were killed in eastern Batticaloa and Jaffna on Tuesday in encounters.

The eight Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam men were killed as the IPKF repulsed an ambush attempt on them by the LTTE at Pullipanchakilla, 26 km north of Batticaloa town yesterday, according to official reports reaching here today.

A large number of LTTE members and supporters were captured along with arms and ammunition after the encounter, the reports added.

In another confrontation near Kiran at Chenkaladi, also in Batticaloa district, the LTTE attacked an Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) convoy with small arms. The attack was repulsed by the Indian soldiers with helicopter support. The casualty figures are not known yet.

IPKF soldier dies: One Indian soldier was killed at Puttur in Jaffna peninsula yesterday, when he tried to loft a land mine during search and combing operation.

The IPKF, it was reported, recovered a large haul of arms and ammunition from Manipai, Sandileppai and neighbouring places in Jaffna yesterday.

Informed sources in Batticaloa said that while some of the militants were killed in the exchange of fire, others, finding their escape

Four girls were raped, 12 civilians were shot dead and 10 houses were burnt by the IPKF at Kiran in Batticoloa.

2 women were raped by the IPKF who came escorting a train from Batticoloa to Valachenai to Morakottan Chennai. One of the women who was raped, Marakatham of Mavadivembu identified one of the men who raped her to the officer in charge. The officer punished the man responsible. The other girl is in a critical condition.

26

COLOMBO, Nov 26.

At least eight Tamil Tigers and an Indian army officer were killed in battles in the Jaffna peninsula, as the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) continued its operation on Wednesday to flush out the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) militants who are now apparently going behind the lines and launching renewed attacks, official sources said here today.

Six militants were shot dead at Uduvil, about 8 km north-west of Jaffna town, in a fierce fight with the IPKF. A large quantity of ammunition along with three AK-47 rifles and two rocket launchers were captured after the operation which sent the LTTE militants on the retreat.

The Sri Lankan national news agency, 'Lankapuvath', reported today that two LTTE men were killed and nine wounded in another major confrontation yesterday at Neerveli, about 4 km north-east of Jaffna. One IPKF officer was also killed and three soldiers were injured, it said quoting official sources.

(However, a Reuter report, quoting military sources, said four Indian soldiers were killed in a clash yesterday at Neerveli. Nine soldiers were wounded and 10 militants captured during the battle.)

Yesterday's operation in the Jaffna peninsula came in the wake of a fierce clash at Pullichankulla and Kiran in Eastern Batticaloa district on Tuesday, when at least eight LTTE militants were killed after the IPKF thwarted an attempt by the LTTE to ambush it and launched a counter aerial and ground offensive. Some of the LTTE boats fleeing are reported to have capsized as the IPKF offensive went on.

Some newspapers here gave the casualty figure of the LTTE in the Batticaloa fighting on Tuesday as between 16 and 18. But it could not be immediately confirmed. — PTI

27

New Delhi, Nov. 27 (PTI): Seven Indian Peace Keeping personnel were killed and five wounded in Mullaitivu when their patrol was fired at by the LTTE during intensified search operations for weapons and ammunition, according to official sources.

The sources said the LTTE casualties were not known as yet. Search operations by the IPKF were continuing, they added.

Civilians shot dead: Tamil militants shot dead four civilians in eastern Sri Lanka, official sources said today.

They said the four men, including two government officials, were killed on Thursday night in their office at Kuchchaveli, 30 km north of Trincomalee.

Officials blamed the LTTE for the killings and said the guerillas had established new jungle hideouts in the eastern district.

28

Five persons were killed and 14 injured, some of them seriously, when members of the LTTE lobbed hand grenades indiscriminately at a large crowd which had gathered to collect relief supplies in Jaffna today, according to an official spokesman here.

About 300 to 400 people had assembled at Chavakachheri in Jaffna town to collect food and medicine being distributed by the IPKF personnel with the help of the local administration.

Two members of the LTTE threw grenades at the crowd and the five were killed on the spot, the spokesman said.

In their search operations, the IPKF defused a 'mine necklace' laid across the railway line.

Five civilians died in Neervely, Jaffna due to the indiscriminate shelling of the IPKF. 68 houses belonging to Tamil speaking Muslims burnt by the IPKF at Neeravipiddy.

29

MADRAS, Nov. 29.

The LTTE has denied reports of its involvement in the killing of five civilians, including an Assistant Government Agent, in Trincomalee district on November 27.

In a press release from Jaffna, issued here today, the LTTE denied both Indian and Sri Lankan radio reports that it was responsible for the Kuchchuveli killings. The LTTE alleged that it was the work of the Sri Lankan Navy and was meant to discourage Tamil and Muslim officials serving in the Eastern region and to fulfil its plans of Sinhala Colonisation in the region.

COLOMBO, Nov. 29.

At least ten suspected Tamil militants were killed during a search operation by the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) at Kachai near Chavakacheri in the northern Jaffna Peninsula yesterday, reports reaching here said today.

They said the search operations were launched following the hand-grenade attack by two LTTE men on civilians receiving food and other relief assistance from the IPKF at Chavakacheri resulting in the death of five people and injuries to four.

Meanwhile, press reports here said that the IPKF launched a massive search operation in the Paduwankarai area in the eastern Batticaloa district yesterday. The IPKF infantrymen were backed by helicopter gunships and armoured vehicles in the operation, they said.

The reports said about 30 youths had been taken into custody for questioning.

IPKF opened fire at a crowd of civilians who were collecting their rations at an army out post in Chavakachcheri. 5 were killed and 15 were injured.

6 civilian killed by the IPKF at Upoddai in Batticaloa.

30

COLOMBO, Nov. 30.

Twenty Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam members and 12 Indian Peace Keeping Force personnel were killed in four separate incidents during the last 24 hours as the IPKF stepped up operations to disarm militants in Sri Lanka's north and east, Sri Lankan sources said today.

The sources said the IPKF destroyed a major hideout of the LTTE near Kiran, about 15 km south of the eastern Batticaloa town, in a dawn raid today, killing eight militants and wounding an estimated 50 others.

The IPKF recovered hand-grenades, walkie-talkies, camouflage uniforms and a large quantity of ammunition from the hideout.

The sources said 11 IPKF men were killed when a landmine they were trying to defuse in Jaffna town exploded yesterday. The landmine had apparently been planted by the militants before the IPKF wrested control of the northern town.

The sources said one IPKF jawan was killed in an encounter yesterday with the militants at Achchuveli in Jaffna peninsula.

The IPKF killed 12 militants in a heavy exchange of fire at Sandilipai, also in the peninsula, on the same day. The IPKF did not suffer any casualty.

In the northern district of Mullaitivu, where the IPKF and the LTTE have been locked in fierce fights from Friday, at least 15 'Tigers' including a front-ranker named 'Robert' and nine Indian soldiers were killed, reports today said. Five soldiers were reported to be wounded. According to earlier accounts, seven Indian soldiers and 10 Tigers were killed in the Mullaitivu battles.

Published reports quoting reliable sources said three IPKF men were missing in Mullaitivu. They are believed to have been captured by the "terrorists".

The English daily *The Island* quoting sources said that the Mullaitivu LTTE leader, identified as Paseelan, was leading the group numbering about 100 in the battle.

The daily reported without giving the date that in an encounter at Kondavil, the IPKF killed five "Tiger elements." Another LTTE militant committed suicide, taking cyanide.

Three policemen were killed in an LTTE raid on the Muttur police station in eastern Trincomalee district today, reliable reports said. The Sri Lankan police along with IPKF were engaged in repulsing the attack till about midday yesterday, the reports added.

A tamil speaking Muslim woman was raped by the IPKF at Navalady village in Siavettuwarn in Valaichchenai.

7 people were killed and 9 including 2 IPKF personnel were injured when a shell fired by the Sri Lankan Army from the Muttur camp fell on the St. Anthony's church which was housing refugees.

Tamils demonstrate
demanding ceasefire
London..

Madras.....

A Diary MOHAN RAM

23.7.87

It is a no-win war in Sri Lanka, wearing into its fifth year today. The battle for the Jaffna peninsula (population 830,000), the last bastion of the Tamil secessionist guerrillas fighting for a homeland of over 2 million people, is stalemated. Sri Lankan forces which launched a major offensive on 25 May have stopped short of their decisive assault on Jaffna city (pop. 200,000).

After an Indian flotilla of fragile fishing boats flying Red Cross flags and carrying food and medicines for the beleaguered people is turned away by the Sri Lankan navy on 3 June, five Indian Air Force transport planes escorted by two Mirage-2000 combat aircraft drop twenty-five tonnes of relief supplies. The sortie is a technical violation of Sri Lanka's air space.

There is a lull in the fighting amidst speculation that India, having got the message across to Sri Lanka that it can rain bombs down on the country with impunity if it chooses to, is engaged in quiet diplomacy. Indian and Sri Lankan newspapers report a political settlement is round the corner and the two countries might sign an agreement in the next few days.

A dramatic development. Velupillai Prabhakaran, the charismatic thirty-three-year-old President and Commander of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), who has been directing the guerrilla campaign in Sri Lanka since late 1986 from his hideout in Jaffna, is flown, with his aides, into New Delhi to meet Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi who wants to discuss the proposed agreement with him. This is a sensible move as the LTTE, the most significant Tamil militant group, will have a veto on any settlement. Significantly, till now, the LTTE has not been a party to the negotiations between India and Sri Lanka.

26.7.87

Talks between Indian government representatives and the LTTE leaders, held incommunicado in New Delhi's plush Ashoka Hotel, and guarded by the elite Black Cat commandos, continue.

28.7.87

Prabhakaran has a ninety-minute meeting with Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, and media reports based on Indian official briefings, suggest that the LTTE intends to go along with the agreement and its reservations are limited to the time-table for the surrender of arms.

But the LTTE leader does not endorse the agreement. He merely says he is satisfied that Rajiv Gandhi has understood Tamil fears and aspirations.

Meanwhile, Sinhala opposition to the proposed agreement (its contents have been leaked) has been building up. The agreement is seen as capitulation to Tamil secessionism. Curfew is imposed on Colombo, the Sri Lankan capital, after riots the previous day. Curfew is then extended to the whole island so that the agreement is signed on 29 July.

Violence continues in Sri Lanka (nineteen are killed in Colombo as police fire on mobs). There is uncertainty in New Delhi about Rajiv Gandhi's two-day visit to Colombo to sign the agreement. The general feeling is: why not wait till the Sri Lankan President, J.R. Jayewardene, overcomes opposition to the agreement and restores normalcy in the island?

The Political Affairs Committee of Rajiv Gandhi's cabinet meets to evaluate reports from Colombo. It thinks cancellation of the Prime Minister's visit would add to Jayewardene's problems and the agreement should be signed to schedule.

29.7.87

Colombo under curfew is eerily silent. Black crows fly in formation over the city's roof-tops and empty streets, a tableau reminiscent of Alfred Hitchcock's film *The Birds*. About 10,000 Sinhalas, including Buddhist monks in saffron robes, gather on the city's outskirts to march to the airport and demonstrate when Rajiv Gandhi arrives. They break the police cordon and five die as the police open fire. Rajiv Gandhi and his wife Sonia, along with a bullet-proof limousine for their use, and a large contingent of officials and New Delhi-based media persons arrive in a chartered jet. They are whisked away from the airport to Galle Face Green, the vast open space overlooking the sea in the heart of the city, for the ceremonial reception. Not to be seen on the welcoming committee are Prime Minister Ranasinghe Premadasa and six other members of the twenty-seven-member cabinet. They are known to oppose the agreement*, which is signed later in the day in the panelled audience hall of the seventeenth century Presidential palace, once the private residence of the last Dutch Governor of Ceylon, Johan Cerard Van Vandelbeak.

30.7.87

The government-owned *Daily News* has the following quote from Shakespeare's *Henry IV* for its customary 'Thought for the Day'

> A peace of the nature of conquest
> For then both the parties are nobly subdued
> And neither party loser

A couple of hours after the newspaper is delivered in hotel rooms, Rajiv Gandhi survives an assassination attempt while inspecting a guard of honour. A naval guard slams his rifle at him but misses the Indian Prime Minister's head. (There is perhaps no precedent in contemporary world history of an attack on a visiting dignitary reviewing a guard of honour. The closest parallel is the assassination of President Anwar Sadat of Egypt while taking the salute at the national day parade.) President Jayewardene apologizes for the outrage. Rajiv Gandhi flies back to New Delhi.

Indian troops begin landing in Sri Lanka, at Jayewardene's request, on a peace-keeping mission.

31.7.87

Two frigates of the Indian navy carrying a crack commando force, and helicopters in support, anchor off Galle Face Green in readiness to rescue Jayewardene and India's High Commissioner, Jyotindra Nath Dixit, in the event of a coup.

An unknown assailant kills a ruling United National Party

Member of Parliament Jayadasa Weerasinghe despite the curfew to contain the violence. There are fears of an insurrection by the Janatha Vimukti Peramuna (JVP), a Sinhala nationalist youth group outlawed since the July 1983 anti-Tamil riots which were largely responsible for escalating the ethnic conflict.

The arrival of the Indian Peace-Keeping Force (IPKF) is officially announced. The Indian military presence, limited to the two Tamil majority northern and eastern provinces, relieves pressure on Sri Lanka's armed forces. The Sri Lankan army is redeployed in the Sinhala areas to thwart the JVP threat.

4.8.87

Prabhakaran, who has rejected the 29 July India-Sri Lanka agreement, returns to Jaffna. (He had insisted in New Delhi that he be taken back to his home base.) News that he would be addressing a public meeting (he has been living 'underground' or has been in exile since 1973) eases tensions because people in Jaffna fear that he is being held captive in New Delhi (the jeep of the officer commanding the IPKF is rocked, in one incident, by an irate mob demanding that their leader be restored to them).

Prabhakaran speaks in Tamil from a prepared text. The English translation is made available by the LTTE.* It is significant for the content and the nuances because it contradicts India's version of the LTTE's attitude to the agreement.

The points he makes:

- The agreement was concluded without consulting the LTTE
- When confronted with the draft of the agreement, the LTTE told India that the agreement was no permanent solution to the Tamil problem
- The agreement primarily concerned India-Sri Lanka relations and contained 'stipulations for binding Sri Lanka within India's big power orbit'
- The agreement put a stop to the armed struggle the LTTE had built up over fifteen years, and disarmed the organization without getting the consent of its fighters or without working out a guarantee of the people's safety and protection (because of this the LTTE would not surrender its arms)
- If the LTTE did not hand over its weapons to the Indian Peace-Keeping Force, it would be in the 'calamitous' situation of having to clash with it
- The monster of Sinhala racism would devour the agreement soon
- Only an independent Tamil Eelam could be a permanent solution to the Tamil problem.

5.8.87

A sullen, grim-looking Dileep Yogi (his real name is a secret), a political aide to Prabhakaran, whips out a Mauser pistol and drops it on the table at a ceremony organized for the LTTE's surrender of its weaponry. Sri Lanka's defence secretary, Gen. A.S. Attiyagalle, touches the weapon to symbolize his acceptance of the 'surrender'. The bespectacled Yogi refuses to repeat the act for cameramen who missed it in the first instance. Nor does he shake hands with the official who hands him the letter of amnesty.

All in all, it is a reluctant farewell to arms for a proud band of fighters at the Palaly airbase near Jaffna. India would like it to be seen as a 'surrender' of arms but this concept is too humiliating for the LTTE to bear and it is for this reason that they have rejected the idea of turning in their weapons at a grand public spectacle near Jaffna railway station. The media notes that Prabhakaran is represented at the ceremony by a political aide, Dileep Yogi, and not a military leader of the LTTE.

18.8.87

President Jayewardene survives an assassination attempt in which grenades are hurled at a meeting of United National Party (UNP) MPs that he is presiding over. Prime Minister R. Premadasa and National Security Minister Lalith Athulathmudali are among those who escape with injuries.

14.9.87

Peace is under seige. The IPKF, after securing the disengagement between the Tamil militants and the Sri Lankan forces, is yet to disarm the groups completely. Clashes between the LTTE and the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF), another militant organization, leave eighty dead in Batticaloa district in the eastern province. The EPRLF says that the LTTE attacked its cadres while the Indian soldiers looked on. It demands that the IPKF maintain peace or return the arms it surrendered so it could defend itself against the LTTE which has said on 1 September that it is taking over the civil administration in the Tamil province to curb 'anti-social activities' (which means, once the persiflage is stripped away, that it is trying to assert its primacy in the eastern province, which it doesn't yet control).

15.9.87

It is unusual for a militant group to try fasting as a political weapon, though the extremist groups in Ireland have tried it on occasion. Amirthalingam Thileepan, 23, chief of the LTTE's propaganda wing, begins a fast unto death to press for a charter of five demands including the release of all political prisoners and detenus held under anti-terrorist laws, an end to Sinhala colonization of Tamil areas, the disarming of the Home Guards (a predominantly Sinhala paramilitary force used against the Tamils in the past) and the closure of all army and police camps in the Tamil areas.

20.9.87

The LTTE backs Thileepan's fast with peaceful picketing of government offices (this has been going on since 16 September) while India warns the militant groups against sabotaging the peace process. The LTTE is specifically blamed for the Batticaloa killings and its political campaign is seen as being aimed at diverting attention from 'fratricidal' killings Meanwhile Thileepan is reported 'near death'.

24.9.87

The IPKF, earlier welcomed by Tamils as saviours, fires on a violent Tamil mob in front of its camp in Mannar* killing one. India warns that its troops will be compelled to respond with even stronger measures if the LTTE provokes violence.

25.9.87

Thileepan dies rousing strong Tamil emotions even as India's High Commissioner in Colombo, J.N. Dixit, goes

to Jaffna to persuade the LTTE to co-operate with the peace agreement.

28.9.87

The LTTE is offered seven places in the twelve-member Interim Administrative Council proposed for the unified Tamil province (comprising the northern and eastern provinces).

2.10.87

There are widespread Sinhala-Tamil clashes followed by Sinhala mob attacks on the IPKF in Trincomalee in the eastern province. Serious doubts are raised about India's military role and the future of the tenuous agreement. Are the Indian forces getting bogged down in a law-and-order role which they disdain to play even at home?

5.10.87

LTTE fighters are known to carry ampoules of potassium cyanide slung down the neck. All the LTTE activists held by a Sri Lankan naval patrol off Point Pedro (and lodged in Palaly camp) on 3 October attempt suicide by swallowing cyanide because they refuse to be taken to Colombo for interrogation (and torture?). Twelve of them, including two ranking military leaders Kumarappa and Puleendran, die immediately.

6.10.87

The LTTE charges India with failure to avert the cyanide deaths and to protect its cadres in general. Prabhakaran declares the cease-fire does not bind them any more. In gruesome retaliation, the LTTE executes eight Sri Lankan soldiers it has been holding hostage for six months. Two policemen are burnt alive and another killed in Jaffna. The interrupted war resumes.

7.10.87

The LTTE goes on a spree of reprisal killings in the eastern province and 150 Sinhalas are reported killed.

8.10.87

More killings, curfew in Jaffna. The IPKF is ordered to shoot at sight after India's army chief Gen. K. Sunderji visits Sri Lanka to assess the situation. (This was necessitated when Jayewardene had threatened to withdraw the IPKF from Trincomalee if it failed to keep peace there.)

9.10.87

India's Defence Minister K.C. Pant rushes to Colombo for talks with Jayewardene. Both declare that the India-Sri Lanka agreement will be implemented.

11.10.87

Jayewardene's amnesty to the Tamils is off since 9 October, when a price of a million rupees is put on Prabhakaran's head.

Indian forces launch a massive offensive, raiding LTTE camps, seizing their radio and TV stations and closing two Tamil dailies *(Eelamurasu and Murasoli)* from Jaffna after their printing presses are destroyed by shelling.

The strength of the IPKF is raised to 15,000 against the LTTE's force of under 2,500.

India is fighting Sri Lanka's war.

14.10.87

A pincer movement on Jaffna city by the IPKF is supported by airdropped para commandos.

25.10.87

The IPKF takes Jaffna with heavy casualties on both sides.

13.11.87

Prime Minister Premadasa charges the IPKF with genocide in the Jaffna peninsula.

18.11.87

The LTTE frees eighteen IPKF prisoners, after repeated postponement. There are hopes of a cease-fire after intermittent clashes and the recovery of LTTE arms caches by the IPKF.

20.11.87

India announces a unilateral forty-eight-hour cease-fire to enable the LTTE to surrender arms amidst pressure in India for a political initiative and an end to military operations. The LTTE ignores the cease-fire and there is no surrender of arms.

23.11.87

India rejects the LTTE demand for an IPKF pull back to the 9 October positions as the condition for the laying down of arms.

2.12.87

Jayewardene says the IPKF is 'on top' of the situation and will complete its mission 'very soon', wiping out terrorism from the Tamil provinces because the LTTE is no position to confront its adversary.

As a riposte to Jayewardene, Maj.-Gen. Harkirat Singh, an IPKF commander, says his men take orders from the Indian government and no one else and they will not leave the island 'until the Tamils are satisfied and their aspirations are met'. Sri Lanka's press takes exception to this statement.

9.12.87

Gen. K. Sunderji, India's army chief, says there is no question of an IPKF withdrawal until the LTTE lays down arms—withdrawal now would only demoralize the Indian army and reduce its credibility.

13.12.87

The IPKF goes on 'red alert' amidst reports that the LTTE plans to crush rival groups.

19.12.87

Jayewardene vows to crush the Tamil militants in the north and the east and the JVP 'subversives' in the south.

21.12.87

Rajiv Gandhi says in Madras that a long-term solution of the Sri Lanka problem is in sight and the LTTE should not be allowed to sabotage it.

23.12.87

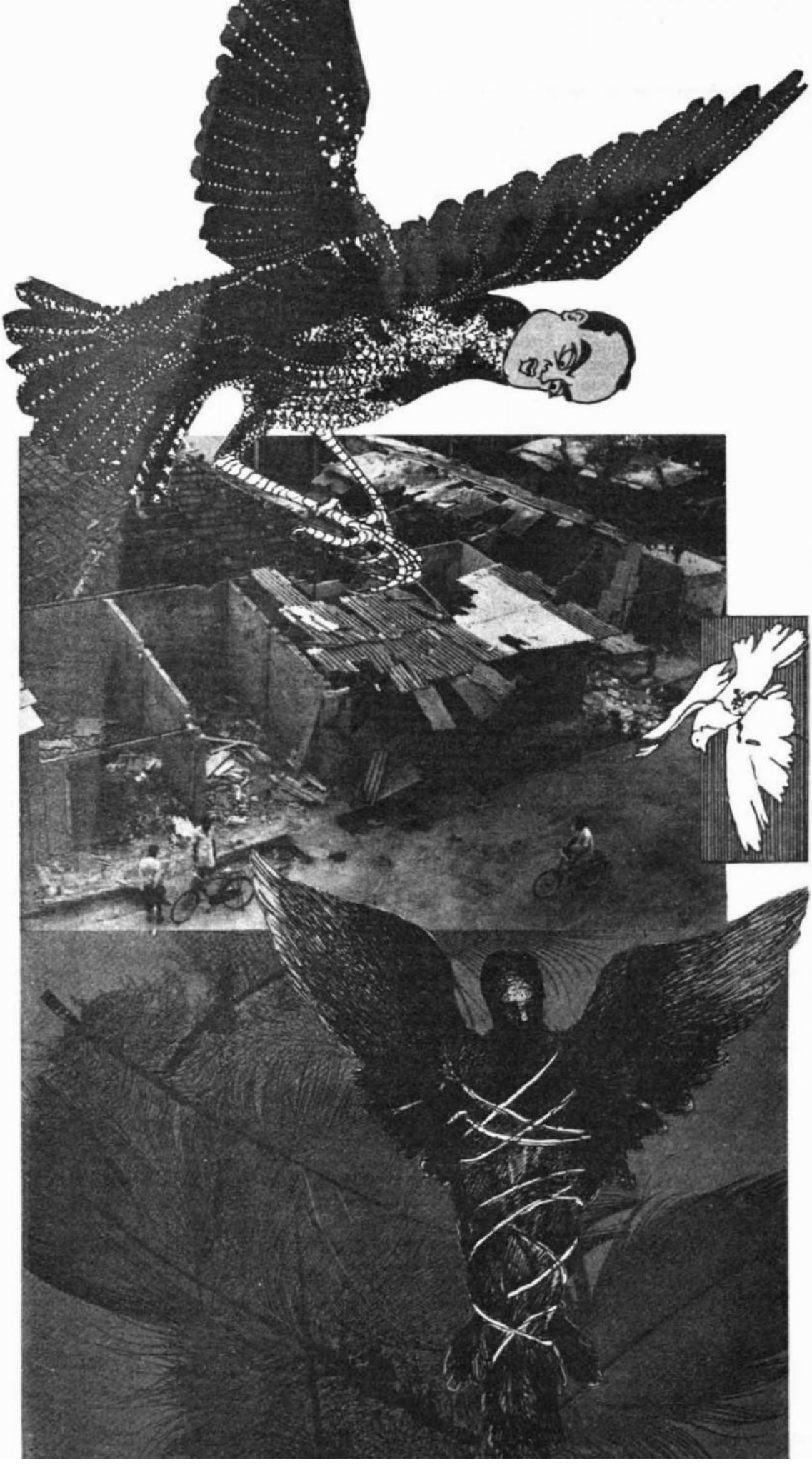
Harsha Abeywardene, chairman of Jayewardene's UNP, and three others, are killed in Colombo by unidentified JVP men.

25.12.87

M.G. Ramachandran (MGR), Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, dies in Madras. Though a supporter of the India-Sri Lanka agreement, his sympathies were with the LTTE. He had tried to arrange a Christmas truce in Sri Lanka which Rajiv Gandhi vetoed.

31.12.87

As Tamil Nadu mourns the death of its Chief Minister, a fierce succession struggle ensues in MGR's All-India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) Party and the Sri Lankan ethnic issue takes a back seat.



சாட்சியாயும் சத்தியமாயும்

பொறு ஈழமே!
புதிதாய் உனது
பூமியை மிதிக்க

இந்தியப் பூட்சுகளுக்குக்
கொஞ்சம் அவகாசம் தேவை.
அதன்
இரும்பு லாடங்களுக்குள்
ஒட்டிக் கொண்டிருக்கும்
இன்னும் ஒருசில

பூவின் இதழ்கள்...
துடைக்க வேண்டாமா?
எவ்வளவு சுறுசுறுப்பான கூத்தாடிக்கும்

ஒரு மறுவேடம் பூணக்
கொஞ்சம் நேரம் வேண்டாமா?
குரூரம் இறுகிய முகங்களுள்
தற்காலிகமாகவாவது

ஒரு புன்னகையைப் பொருத்தச்
சிறிது காலம் வேண்டும்.
"இந்திய ராணுவத்தை
உடனே அனுப்பு.
ஈழத்தை மீட்க
உடனே அனுப்பு."
உள்ளம் அறியாது
உதடுகளில் நிணிக்கப்பட்ட

முழக்கங்களுக்குக் கீழே
மிதிபட்டுத் துடிக்கும்
உண்மையின் ஓலம்
எனது கரைகளுக்கே
எட்டாதபோது
உனது கரைகளைத்
தொட்டாவிடும்?
நாளை இவ்வரிகள்
சாட்சியாய் இருக்கும்
நாளை இப்பாடல்
சத்தியமாய் இருக்கும்
வலக்கன்னம்

பாசிசக் கைகளால் வீங்க
இடக்கன்னத்தைக் காட்டுவது
இந்தியாவுக்கா?
அறிவாயா?

பருந்தின் கூரிய சொண்டுகள்
பிரிவது
ஒரு புறாக்குஞ்சுக்கு
முத்தம் கொடுக்கவோ?
உள்ளான குஞ்சே!

எமது கரை
உனக்குப்
பதுங்கு குழியாகட்டும்.
அண்ணாந்து பார்!

இந்த வாளத்தின்
கிழக்கிலும் மேற்கிலும்
உதிர்ந்து கொண்டிருப்பவை
அனாதை இறகுகள்.

பறந்து கொண்டிருப்பதோ
பருந்தின் பரிவாரம்
என்விழிகளில் முட்டிநிற்கும்
கண்ணீர் ஊடகத்தின் வழியே
மங்கலாக
ஒரு காட்சி விரிகிறது.

சுதந்திர வெளியில்
உன்னைத் தழுவ
என்சிறைகளை நான்
உடைத்துக் கொண்டிருக்கிறேன்.

— இன்குலாப் **1985**

வீரவணக்கம்

2nd Lt. Suman	3.11.87
Lt. Kutti	3.11.87
Sugandan	15.11.87
Ronnie	15.11.87
Lal	15.11.87
Gopu	16.11.87
Darsini	16.11.87
Lt. Ailen	27.11.87
Kulam	28.11.87
Mayuran	8.11.87
Lt. Mohanram	2.11.87
Capt Nathan	8.11.87
Inbu	8.11.87
Rohan	29.11.87
Nakulan	9.11.87
Geethan	12.11.87
Lt. Vincent	30.11.87
Ashok	22.11.87
Seelan	17.11.87
Panjan	24.11.87
D. Murhty	11.11.87
D. Murhty	11.11.87
Karan	28.11.87

Girisanthan	8.11.87
Suren	10.11.87
Thuyilan	27.11.87
Lookman	16.11.87
2nd Lt. Murugesh	10.11.87
Sabari	3.11.87
Maj. Pasilan	8.11.87
Lt. John	8.11.87
Murali	26.11.87
Sivakumar	26.11.87

துடி எறியும் புலைய!
எறிகோல் கொள்ளும் இழிசின!
கால மாரியின் அம்பு தைப்பினும்,
வயல் கெண்டையின் வேல் பிறழினும்,
பொலம்புனை ஓடை அண்ணல் யானை
இலங்குவாள் மருப்பின் நுதிமடுத்து ஊன்றினும்,
ஓடல் செல்லாப் பீடுடை யாளர்
நெடுநீர்ப் பொய்கை பிறழிய வானை
நெல்லுடை நெடுநகர்க் கூட்டுமுதல் புரளும்,
தண்ணடை பெறுதல் யாவது? படினே;
மாசில் மகளிர் மன்றல் நன்றும்,
உயர்நிலை உலகத்து, நுகர்ப; அதனால்
வம்ப வேந்தன் தானை
இம்பர் நின்றும் காண்டிரோ, வரவே!
சாத்தந்தையார்.

Lt. John 8.11.87

Roni 15.11.87

Murali 26.11.87

Sivakumar 26.11.87

Lt. Allen 27.11.87

Lookman 16.11.87

Sabari 3.11.87

Lt. Nakulan 9.11.87

2nd Lt. Murugesh 10.11.87

Maj. Pasilan 8.11.87

KILLING FIELD 87 November

claims	IPKF		LTTE		S.L. ARMY		OTHER MILITANTS		CIVILIANS	
	KILLED	WOUNDED	KILLED	WOUNDED	KILLED	WOUNDED	KILLED	WOUNDED	KILLED	WOUNDED
IPKF	5	3								
LTTE									6	15
MEDIA										

3
		25						1	
		3							

4

5
1	4	6	6c						
								12	

6
1	4								

7
		11						3	3c
								11	6c

8
1	7	26	3c						

9
1	10	18	14c						
								57	15

10
		20							
								27	

11
2*	17*	5*	3*					15*	2*

12
2	10	13	23					25*	

13
		1*	3c*						

14
		3	7c						

15
		31*	20* 12c						
		3						7	

16
	60*	30*							
		2						1	

17
2		15							

20
4*	11*							4*	

21
			1						

22
		100							
								5	6

23
								2	

25
1*	8*								
								12	

26
1	3	8	9						

27
7	5							4*	
		1							

28
								5	14
		1						5	

29
		10							30c
								11	15

30
12*		20*							
	2							7	7

31

TOTAL
40	234	250	55 45c	1				53	16 33c
	2	10						150	58 6c

* - Sri Lankan Information.c-captured. EP-EPRLF T-TELO, P-PLOTE, EN-ENDLF, E-EROS TNA-Tamil National Army CVF-Citizen's Voluntary Force

CHAPTER 6

1987

the heinous crimes of indian peace keeping

December

1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16
17	18	19 J.R. vows to crush northern 'terrorists' and southern subversives.	20
21	22	23 H. Abeywardene, chairman UNP and 3 others are killed by J.V.P.	24
25 MGR died.	26	27	28
29	30	31	

EDITORIAL

India in Sri Lanka

Do We Have to Be Pushed out?

December '87

IT'S almost two months since the IPKF began its "peace offensive" against the LTTE. It's also more than a month that the LTTE's hold over Jaffna, we were told, had been completely smashed. But the war is still on. If it has not grown in intensity, it has now spread over a much bigger area. And the toll keeps rising, every day, every hour. Every morning we wake up to the by now routine reports of yet another couple of IPKF-LTTE encounters : 9 IPKF men die in blast, 12 IPKF men hurt in LTTE attack in the East, 20 militants killed near Jaffna. Yet, there are no signs, absolutely no signs of any pullout of Indian army from the island in near future. Perhaps our battered and bruised jawans and the "brave" brass will return only when there is a "pushout". Like the two senior Indian diplomats in Colombo who were recently deported back to India on the orders of Jayewardene. That is, after they were exposed to be intelligence agents.

But right now, both Jayewardene and Rajiv Gandhi want the IPKF to stay in the island, even if for reasons altogether different. Old Junius is a much relieved soul now. Who else would have obliged him the way the Indian jawans are doing his dirty job in the jungles of Jaffna? And the dirty work need not end with the liquidation of the "threat" from LTTE, down south the JVP is always a potential "threat". Nearer home, for young Rajiv too these are indeed moments of happiness. Fun times. Look at the laurels the boys have brought him from the island expedition. Seldom has an Indian Prime Minister received such nice accolades from the heads of the neighbouring countries. And how nicely has the otherwise gloomy security scenario in the Indian Ocean suddenly brightened up, thanks to the IPKF presence in Sri Lanka. So, three cheers for Rajiv-Jayewardene accord! Long live the "Indian Peace Mission" in Lanka!

Menawhile, with every passing day, the Indian army is exposing, more and more of its weaknesses. The war with LTTE has exploded the myth of our forces being a really fighting and modern military outfit. Far less are they an expert in conducting counter-insurgency operations. And with every loss it is suffering, the transformation of the so-called peace-keeping force into an occupation force is becoming complete. And that perhaps demolishes yet another myth about our men in uniform. Given the chance, they are equally violent and vindictive.

So, what does it all add up to? The same scenario is going to continue : 7 shot, 11 captured, 13 released, truce declared, truce broken. Till we can compel our rulers to pull out. Or, till the Sri Lankans push us out of their territory.

Rajinder Puri, The Statesman, 8.12.87.

Far Eastern Economic REVIEW

The price of power

Indian opposition questions military role in Jaffna

Mr. Rajiv Gandhi has been winning some political victories after a long, losing streak. He carried Nagaland by a one-vote majority but with 4 Independents to support the Congress, there should be a stable government. Its job now is to end the insurgency. More crucially, Mr. Gandhi has retained the support of MGR in Tamilnadu and this prevented a Tamilnadu backlash over the IPKF's operations in the Sri Lankan north. All the effors of Mr. Karunanidhi and his DMK to cash in on the situation in Sri Lanka have so far failed.

However, this does not mean that the IPKF's presence and work in Sri Lanka is not a major political concern for the Gandhi regime. It is, and will become a nagging worry if the IPKF gets too deeply entangled in a mess, protracted war against the LTTE. Much would depend on the LTTE's fight-back capabilities and its skill in advancing the fight into a new and different phase. And that in turn will rest largely on the sentiment of the Tamil majority. Have the ravages of the war, especially the civilian death toll and the hardships and sufferings of the community, left behind to many deep scars. Or will the bitterness be slowly erased by the human urge for peace, security and normal life, and the process of adjustment.

Meanwhile, the role of the IPKF and its future still remain a major debate in political circles in India and among the Indian intelligentsia. Salamat Ali, South Asia Correspondent of the FEER, wrote this report from Delhi.

Lanka Guardian, 1.12.87.

For the first time in the four years since the Sri Lankan ethnic crisis escalated, the Indian Government and the opposition are openly divided on a major foreign-policy issue. While the government maintains that organised Tamil militant resistance to the Indian Peace-Keeping Force (IPKF) in Sri Lanka has crumbled, the opposition believes that India is caught in a trap and must find ways of extricating itself at the earliest opportunity.

Rarely in Indian politics do parties adopt antipodal attitudes on foreign-policy issues involving the Indian armed forces. The government thinks its peace accord with Colombo, which sent Indian troops to Sri Lanka, is a major achievement. The opposition calls it a military misadventure and diplomatic absurdity.

Those supporting the government's view argue that Indian troops had to be sent to Sri Lanka because the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), the largest Tamil separatist group, was not prepared to surrender its arms to the Sri Lankan army. Also, India could not watch Sri Lanka disintegrate and thereby threaten regional stability, including India's own security. It is also argued that the peace accord and the IPKF operations signify the emergence of India as the regional power. Any hasty retreat from Sri Lanka would make a mockery of the Indian diplomatic goal of keeping external forces from intruding into South Asia.

Replying to the opposition's scathing criticism in parliament on 11 November, Minister of State for External Affairs K. Natwar Singh emphasised the security of India's environs as one important reason for the agreement with Sri Lanka and added that India did not want Sri Lanka to become a "cockpit" of superpower rivalry and that by sending in its troops. New Delhi had prevented hostile forces from striking roots in Sri Lanka.

The opposition wants the IPKF to be withdrawn soon. Although the opposition would be willing to give the government some time to implement such a pull-out. It is loath to admit this in public. Indian critics assert that while the army went in to protect the minority Tamils, it has ended up killing many of them.

REPORT

However, the government has declared that the IPKF would stay in Sri Lanka until the LTTE is disarmed or voluntarily surrenders its arms and extends unconditional support to the political solution laid down under the Indo-Sri Lanka agreement. Ceasefire pleas by the LTTE have been turned down by India and there will not be a unilateral ceasefire by the IPKF.

Although the opposition has not yet made an issue of it, it is grumbling over the financial costs of the IPKF operations and the casualties. At the beginning of the operations India had about 8,000 troops in Sri Lanka. Since then Indian strength has increased to two infantry divisions in addition to several battalions of paramilitary forces. Sri Lankan official sources said India was spending more than US$1 million per day on the operation. All this extradram on the public coffers is being sustained at a time when the Indian economy is reeling from the worst drought of the century.

The opposition suspects that the government is not disclosing the true casualty figures and that the announced toll any way did not include the paramilitary forces, which were not trained to deal with Claymore anti-personnel mines, booby-trapped houses and other such hazards. Jaswant Singh, one of the opposition's defence specialists, said in parliament on 6 November that Indian casualties in Sri Lanka were much higher than in any war the country has fought so far. The opposition hastens to clarify that it is not criticising the Indian armed forces but only those who sent them to Sri Lanka to fight an undeclared war on a foreign soil for a purpose which is not clear.

The Indian Government's strategy seems to be to hold the LTTE at bay, let a unified administration for Sri Lanka's northern and eastern provinces take hold and pave the way for a referendum on the unification of the two provinces.

COVER STORY

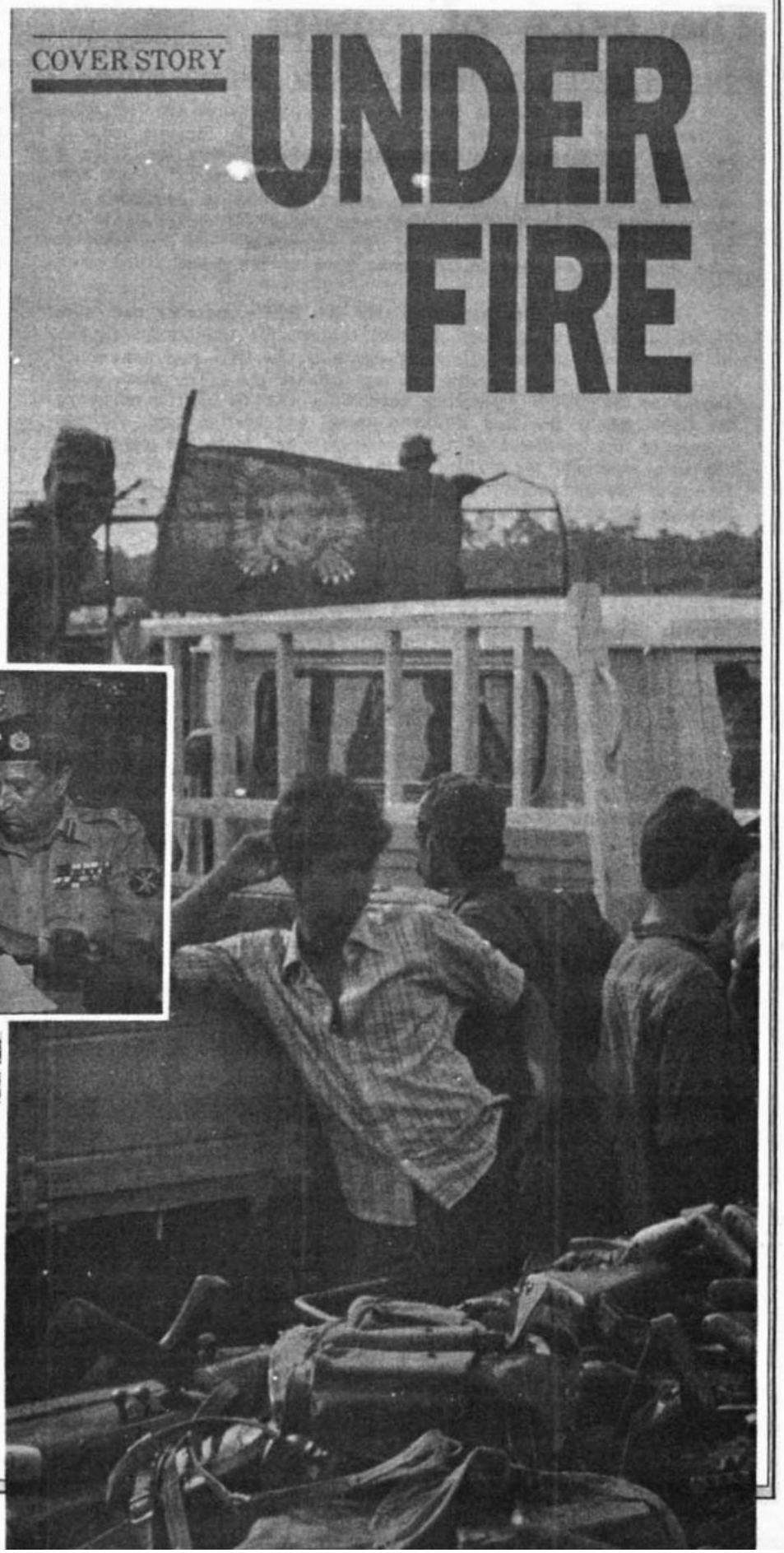
UNDER FIRE

"War is too serious a matter to be left to generals"
—Talleyrand

REPORT

Perhaps. But what then of peace? Sixteen years after it fought its last great war, the Indian army finds itself used more often to wage peace than to conduct war. It is not a role that the army is happy—or comfortable—with. But circumstances have conspired to turn it into one gigantic peace-keeping force that is always on call for civilian duties. If order has to be restored after communal conflagrations, then it is the army that is summoned. If vital supplies have to be kept moving in the face of agitations, then the call goes out for the army. If the police and paramilitary authorities seem unable to grapple with extremism in Punjab, then the army is asked to capture the Golden Temple and comb Punjab villages searching for terrorists. And if President Jayewardene and Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi finally arrive at an accord that will resolve both Sri Lanka's ethnic problems, and the simmering discontent in its relations with India, then of course, it is the Indian army that will be asked to police the accord; its post-1971 role formalised under the title of "Indian Peace Keeping Force".

Whether all this is any good for the army has long been considered. After all, should a military fighting force be allowed to be sidetracked into a secondary role of backing up the domestic authority of the political apparatus? But in recent weeks, in the aftermath of the Sri Lanka operation, a second, harsher question has begun to be asked: Is the army any good at any of this? Judging by



Ashok Vahie

Right: Indian jawans in Jaffna, Sri Lanka — fighting someone else's battle; and (top) Pakistan surrenders to India in December '71: days of valour

reports of its performance in Punjab in 1984 and Sri Lanka in 1987, say the critics, the Indian army has demonstrated overconfidence and ineptness. Worse still, it has acted with indiscriminate brutality, causing needless civilian casualties.

The provocation for the recent controversy was the Indian army's performance in Sri Lanka. As reports of high casualties streamed in, there was first, mystification that what had seemed like a simple enough operation had turned so sour, and then anger that Indian blood should be spilled in a foreign country to settle an ethnic feud that in no way involved India. There were suggestions that Lanka's wily President Junius Jayewardene had tricked Rajiv Gandhi into agreeing to do his dirty work for him and that the army was being made to pay the price for the Prime Minister's naivety.

"I do not see why our men were sent to Jaffna when the Sri Lankan army is sitting in its barracks," said a bitter J.C. Malhotra, the father of a young officer who was wounded in the fighting. Added his son, Major Deepak Malhotra of the 18th Garhwal Regiment, recuperating in hospital from a shrapnel injury, "It was clear when we were sent that we had not been asked to go and fight a war." And yet the army had found itself in a pitched battle with an experienced and tricky enemy who was prepared to fight to the death.

Off the record, the army brass made its position clear. The army had not been consulted about the 29 July accord when it was being negotiated. Even when it was informed that its men would constitute the Indian Peace Keeping Force, it was given to understand that the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) were India's friends and to be treated gently. At no stage was it warned that it would be pitched into a bloody and treacherous guerilla battle against the Tigers. At best, it was suggested, that the army could expect a repeat of the April 1971 precedent when India sent a brigade to help Ceylon capture the headquarters of the Sinhalese JVP extremist group. Says one serving officer (who, by tradition, cannot be identified): "We were told to turn a blind eye to our Tamil friends and if necessary, protect them from the government after they laid down their arms. The real danger, we were informed, came from the Lankan armed forces who might try to stage a coup against the Jayewardene regime."

This situation altered quite radically after 5 October, 1987 when 17 LTTE members consumed cyanide pills while in Lankan custody. The shock of that mass suicide led to the LTTE attack on the Batticaloa district the following day and made it clear that with the LTTE in a fighting mood, no peace was possible. And in a sudden reversal, the IPKF, charged with keeping the peace, was told to take on the Tigers.

Wounded IPKF soldiers in a Pune hospital

Major Deepak Malhotra

"I do not see why our men were sent to Jaffna when the Sri Lankan army is sitting in its barracks," said a bitter J.C. Malhotra, the father of a young officer who was wounded in the fighting

But even then, claim Ministry of Defence (MOD) officials, the men in the field found themselves receiving conflicting signals from the political and administrative establishment. Says a senior official of the Directorate General of Military Operations (DGMO), which guided the IPKF strategy: "One of the reasons for the IPKF's lack of preparedness was that the political developments were not conveyed to us in time." Moreover, suggests the official there was a complete lack of co-ordination between the MOD, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) which further confused the IPKF, 4,000 miles away from home.

Soldiers who have returned from Jaffna hold the DGMO responsible for not taking decisions in time. One officer recalls how his unit informed base on their hotline that the LTTE had hoisted its flag on a strategic installation in Jaffna. Should they attack and have the flag lowered? Remembers the official: "We were waiting around while headquarters dithered about taking a deci-

sion. We were finally given the go-ahead and had the flag lowered but this kind of indecisiveness slowed down our combat rate in the field." For their part, DGMP officials argue that all such decisions had to be cleared with the other involved ministries and hence could not be taken at once.

Most of all says the army, it was sent into Jaffna with totally inadequate intelligence back-up. It blames the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) for seriously underestimating the strength of the LTTE and its weaponry. Agrees Shreedhara Rao of the Institute of Defence studies and Analysis: "Somebody (in the intelligence set-up) was obviously making a mess of it."

According to the angry army brass, the IPKF did not even have updated maps of the Jaffna peninsula. The vintage maps the troops were supplied with were of little use and the first detailed maps used in the operation were put together from photographs taken by the Indian Air Force's (IAF) reconaissance helicopters. Because the IPKF did not understand the terrain, it could not block exit points from Jaffna during its prolonged siege of the town and nearly 1,000 LTTE men (including leader Pirabhakaran) slipped out to safety.

That's how the army sees it. Not everybody else agrees with that interpretation. Officials in the Ministry of External Affairs and the Prime Minister's office are outraged by the army brass's claim that they were not consulted before the accord was signed. They insist that the chief of the army staff, General K. Sundarji, was fully conversant with the details of the Accord and quite aware of the possibility that IPKF may actually have to wage war. Nor do they accept the DGMO's contention that there was a lack of co-ordination between the MOD, the MEA and the PMO. On the contrary, they say, a core group containing representatives from all three ministries was formed with the specific aim of avoiding such a lack of co-ordination.

"The problem", says a senior government official with more than a touch of annoyance, "is that the Indian army went to Jaffna with an exaggerated sense of its own capabilities and an over-optimistic assessment of how soon it could neutralise all opposition. When these calculations proved wrong, all the old excuses were trotted out: political interference, bureaucratic inertia, intelligence failure, etc."

Certainly, the figures suggest that it has been uphill all the way for the army in Jaffna. The government concedes that

Within the army, there is dismay that its new role as a gigantic peace-keeping force will give the generals ideas and an insistence that civilian authority will always be recognised as supreme

the IPKF, which includes men from the 4th, 36th and 54th Infantry Divisions comprises 29,633 personnel. (Unofficial estimates say the figure is even higher. Compare this to the Sri Lankan army's total strength of 10,856). It concedes also that it is costing India a whopping Rs three crore a day to keep the IPKF in Jaffna. Against this, the Indian estimate of LTTE strength is just over 4,000 and it is doubtful if the Tigers can spend Rs three crores over the whole campaign, let alone every day.

Yet, the IPKF has had it rough all the way. It has taken days on operations that it thought would take hours and the casualties have mounted. The Ministry of Defence's casualty figures are relatively low—260 dead and 700 wounded—but nearly everybody agrees that this is an underestimate just as the MOD's figures for LTTE casualties—between 700 to 800 dead—are probably on the high side. But even the MOD's own internal assessments demonstrate that the rate of casualties among senior ranks has been the highest of any operation since 1947. According to one assessment the ratio of casualties among officers and Junior Commissioned Officers (JCOs) to other ranks is 1:6.7. In comparison, the figure for the 1965 War was 1:9.3 and in 1971, it was even lower—1:9.8.

In Sri Lanka, the army was also shaken by the hostility of the local population. As a well-trained guerilla force, the Tigers would quickly change into civilian clothes and merge with the civilian population once the IPKF advanced

No wonder the foreign press is suggesting that the Indian army is making a hash of things. Even more worrying from the army's point of view are the repeated allegations that the IPKF has stopped distinguishing between Tigers and civilians and is now indiscriminate in its choice of targets. The LTTE claims that over 1,000 civilians have died during the operation and uses words like genocide. The army concedes that innocent civilians have died in the cross-fire between the two forces but puts the death toll at between 200 to 300.

The Indian army is used to public support even when things go badly wrong as they did during the 1962 conflict with China. It is therefore hurt and nonplussed by suggestions that it is a hamfisted, largely over-rated force. Officers argue that it is unfair to judge the performance of the army on the basis of the Sri Lanka operation because of the constraints under which it has operated.

And certainly, even if the brass's claims of intelligence failure and political interference are to be disregarded, there can be no denying that the army has been functioning in extremely unfavourable conditions.

Because it is a peace-keeping force, it has been required to fight, in its own terms, with one arm tied behind its back. It has been prevented from using heavy artillery, or from shelling civilian areas. Its men have advanced without air cover and have often not known who the enemy was. During the first week of fighting, the IPKF suffered the maximum casualties and General Harkirat Singh, the General Officer Commanding the 54th Division had to rush to Delhi and plead with his superiors for more troops and for helicopters that could strafe Jaffna.

It was only after his request was granted that the IPKF advance swiftened and two MIG 25 helicopters found their targets in the Chavakacheri areas. When the IPKF heard that the militants were holding a secret high-level meeting, they used helicopters for heavy precision gunfire and were able to wound Pirabhakaran in the leg and throw the LTTE into some form of disarray.

The army was also shaken by the hostility of the local population. As a well-trained guerrilla force, the Tigers would quickly change into civilian clothes and merge with the civilian population once the IPKF advanced. Consequently, every Tamil civilian seemed suspect; a

situation that made the IPKF feel like an army of occupation. Soldiers who tried to bridge the gap with the locals sometimes met with unfortunate consequences. Army sources tell of a young Junior Commissioned Officer who saw an old Tamil woman weeping. Overcome by sympathy, he stopped his jeep and went over to console her. He was still being reassuring when the woman pulled out a grenade from under her clothes and blew the both of them up.

Critics of the army's progress in Lanka point out that it was India that trained the Tigers and supplied them with arms. This, they say, should have made it easier for the IPKF to have dealt with them especially once the supply-line was cut. The army disputes this and claims that firstly, the LTTE had enough arms to last for a month; secondly that the grenades and mortars were all produced locally; and thirdly that overseas Tamils continued to finance and supply the Tigers even after India cut off supplies. Agrees an MEA spokesman: "We intercepted shipments coming from Singapore. More such shipments keep coming. We can't guard the casualties of 172 (official figure), over 200 civilians were killed in the cross-fire, the Harmandir was nicked by bullets and the Akal Takht was destroyed. Ten days after Bluestar began, when President Giani Zail Singh visited the Temple, there were still snipers hiding in the buildings and one of the army officers escorting Zail Singh was shot in the arm. Afterwards, the army blamed R&AW, argued that the restrictions placed on it were unreasonable, and insisted that the extremists were much better fighters than had been assumed at first.

After Bluestar came Operation Woodrose in which troops combed the villages of Punjab looking for terrorists. Punjab politicians say the military behaved in a hamfisted and arbitrary manner, needlessly maltreating innocent youths and acting like an army of occupation. The army denies the charges but the damage to the Sikh psyche caused by both Bluestar and Woodrose has been incalculable. Even Sikhs in the army rebelled over Bluestar. Around 2,000 Sikh soldiers mutinied and had to be forcibly captured by their colleagues. It was the first major mutiny in the history of the independent Indian army.

There are two ways of looking at the army's experience in Punjab. The first is to argue that the army botched up Bluestar and made a hash of Woodrose in which few real terrorists were captured and many new ones probably created. The second is to argue that the army should never have been placed in the role of having to bail out civilian authority from political problems that were largely of its own creation. The army's job is to wage war against India's enemies, not to kill our own people.

Predictably, the army brass incline to the second view and in the aftermath of Lanka there is a great deal of resentment over the manner in which the army is being counted on to help solve the regime's political difficulties. This resentment marks a new phase in relations between the Army and the government which have generally been business-like and non-controversial. Never has a civilian directive been seriously questioned let alone disobeyed. Only once, when Indira Gandhi wanted the army to march into Bangladesh in March 1971, and the chief of staff General S.H.F.J. Manekshaw refused, saying his men would not be ready till December, did the army have to insist on having its way.

During wars, the government has generally accepted the army chief's advice. For instance in 1965, when Pakistan attacked India from Akhnoor and Chhamb, General J.N. Chaudhuri told Lal Bahadur Shastri that he would prefer to concentrate on Lahore and Sialkot and the government let him do things his way. "The civilian directive, of course, has to be obeyed," says General Jagjit Singh Arora , "but we usually try and pull our chestnuts out of the fire."

Of course, there are those who believe that there were times when civilian authority should have been told where to get off. A case in point is Pandit Nehru's famous order to 'throw out' the Chinese in 1962. According to General S.K. Sinha (Retd.) it was a "major mistake" and shouldn't have been accepted by the army. "To obey such an order", he says, "is unfair to the nation so the army chief should resign."

On the whole though, the army has resisted attempts to politicise it. Generals still recall the courageous stand of General M.K. Raina, the chief of staff during the Emergency, who resisted all attempts by Mrs Gandhi to use army personnel and property for her political ends. Naturally, there have been exceptions. Says General Sinha: "I have never forgotten the day when during the Army Day parade in 1983 in Delhi, the chief of staff, General Krishna Rao, made Rajiv Gandhi the chief guest even though he was only an ordinary MP whose only claim to fame was that he was his mother's son."

In recent months, there has been a certain chilling in relations between General Sundarji and Rajiv Gandhi. The coolness began early this year, shortly after the border confrontation that nearly led to a war with Pakistan. In the light of the tensions between the two countries, the government thought it advisable to scale down the scope of Operation Brasstacks, the massive exercise that cost Rs 300 crore as 1.7 lakh armymen simulated war conditions in the deserts of Rajasthan. Brasstacks was Sundarji's brainchild and he resisted all attempts by the government to reduce its magnitude. Finally, Sundarji had his way but the government was not pleased.

By mid-year, the Prime Minister made his apprehensions about India's military priorities known at an army commanders conference that he addressed. India, he said, had obviously gone wrong in its assessments resulting in an undue escalation of tension in the western front. "We should", declared Rajiv Gandhi, "be more prudent." Subsequently, the magnitude of Operation Chequer Board, an exercise scheduled for the India-China border, was scaled down. The differences in perception have continued through 1987 and at the height of the controversy over the Bofors gun, the Opposition hoped that Sundarji would go public with his stand. There was even talk of negotiating a second term as chief to keep him happy, but in the finest traditions of the Indian army, the General has refuted all stories of coolness and shunned controversy. Still, the tales of differences have not dried up and even over the Lanka

The army brass made its position clear, regarding the Lanka operation, off the record. The army had not been consulted about the Rajiv Gandhi-Junius Jayewardene Accord when it was being negotiated. Even when it was informed that its men would constitute the IPKF, it was given to understand that the Tamil Tigers were India's friends and that they were to be treated gently

operation, there are suggestions that Gandhi and Sundarji have disagreed.

There have been some differencesof opinion between generals and the political establishment before. General Thimayya, as chief of staff, conducted a running battle with defence minister Krishna Menon and Menon fell out with many senior officers (including Sam Manekshaw, then a Brigadier) who he subsequently disgraced. But the differences have been personal rather than operational in nature and rarely have they been thought to matter because the supremacy of the civilian establishment has always been regarded as absolute.

This situation has changed a little in recent years because of the increasing dependance of the political establishment on the army. Perceptive observers of the Indian political scene have always viewed with concern the experience of the Pakistani army which was carved out of the old Indian army. In Pakistan, as civilian unrest grew more and more unruly, the administration kept counting on the army to resolve order. Finally, when it tired of bailing out the politicians, the army stepped in and seized control itself. A brief post-1971 experiment with democracy under Z.A. Bhutto suffered the same fate.

Conscious that something similar could happen in India the government raised an array of paramilitary forces, control of which was vested with the home ministry rather than the defence ministry. The Border Security Force (BSF) and the Central Reserve Police (CRP) were supposed to intervene when the local police failed to contain civilian unrest so that there was no need to depend on the army.

In the troubled 70s, this arrangement collapsed, particularly during communal riots. The pattern was nearly always the same. After the local police, the armed constabulary, and the paramilitary forces had failed, the army was sent for and usually succeeded in restoring order in such major towns as Varanasi, Aligarh, Moradabad, Ahmedabad, Baroda, Bombay-Bhiwandi and Meerut. During the 1984 anti-Sikh riots, the army was called out in virtually every important Indian city.

All of this has made nonsense of the plans for a paramilitary buffer and seemed to vindicate Field Marshal Claude Auchinleck who, when the uniform of the post-Independence army was being devised, insisted on olive green over khaki on the grounds that as the army would be called out into the streets so often, it was better that it sported a different colour from the police. The home ministry now plans to raise an additional 20 to 30 CRP companies but there are doubts about how effective this move will be.

Within the army, there is dismay that its new role as a gigantic peace-keeping force will give the generals ideas and an insistence that civilian authority will always be recognised as supreme. But everybody is aware that the army cannot function as both a peace-keeping force and a war-waging outfit indefinitely.

For one, sending units out into the streets disrupts their training programme and interferes with their efficacy in battlefield conditions. For another, the army will go the way of the BSF and the CRP if it is overused for civilian purposes. Familiarity breeds contempt and frequent duty could well diminish the deterrent effect of the army's presence.

Nor is it good for army morale to be used for civilian purposes. The army is used to the respect and admiration of the Indian people. And yet, no army can fight insurgencies with its reputation intact. The British in Ulster, the Israelis in Beirut, the Americans in Vietnam and

Gen Sundarji with commanders of the IPKF in Jaffna: no cooling of relations with Rajiv Gandhi

the Russians in Afghanistan have all been accused of brutality and of committing atrocities against civilians. Much the same sort of thing has happened to the Indian army. The people of the North-East—in Nagaland and Mizoram especially—have horrific stories to tell of torture, murder, rape, looting and indiscriminate destruction of property. The stories are probably exaggerated or even fabricated—but they damage the army's reputation. And while, the North-East was sufficiently removed from the national mainstream for this to not matter unduly, Punjab is too close to home. In the aftermath of Bluestar and Woodrose the same kinds of stories began makiing the rounds and some commentators even alleged that the army had pilfered the collection boxes at the Golden Temple. While such charges are without foundation, it seems clear that the Indian army is unable to operate with the minimal force required for civilian operations and that finally this will lead to irreparable damage to its reputation should it continue to be used as a peace-keeping force.

There is, of course, one great question left that is never asked: how good is the Indian army in the battlefield conditions for which it is trained? The official line is that the army is perfect and to question it is to be unpatriotic. (Dinesh Singh reiterated this stance in Parliament recently: "It is unfortunate that there are members who are not proud of being Indian and of their army".)

And yet, traditionally, Indians are supposed to make bad soldiers. Ever since the Aryans, every single invader has had no difficulty in subduing local resistance and taking charge. Writes Field Marshal Montgomery of Alamein in his classic *History of Warfare*: "Indians were interested in war, liked it, but reached no standard. The Hindu soldiers and their commanders were not lacking in courage, but even the great individuals such as Chandragupta Maurya seemed to have lacked vision and had little strategical or tactical sense."

History is replete with instances of Indian military failure such as Porus who was surprised by Alexander because he had not expected the Greeks to form a bridgehead and launch a sudden attack. Of the Rajputs, our famous fighters, Montgomery says: "The Rajputs were tremendously brave—but equally stupid." The Moghuls had little difficulty in demolishing Indian resistance despite their numerical disadvantage and the British swept aside Indian armies with an easy nonchalance. The ultimate humiliation was probably the Battle of Plassey in 1757 in which 800 Europeans together with some 2,000 sepoys and eight pieces of artillery defeated an Indian army of 34,000 infantry, 15,000 cavalry and 53 cannons!

Lt-Gen Harkirat Singh with IPKF in Jaffna

Supporters of the army would argue that the post-Independence Indian army has proved that leopards can change their spots. Detractors can retort that India-Pakistan battles prove nothing because the fight is not against outsiders and that the one time that the Indian army has faced foreigners—the Chinese in 1962—it has crumbled. The army's own internal audit of that debacle, the Henderson-Brookes Report (technically secret but quoted by Neville Maxwell in *India's China War*) reveals a sad story of bungling and incompetence.

And even the two wars with Pakistan have not necessarily covered the army with glory. The 1965 conflict was a stalemate and the Indian operations came in for much criticism from strategists. Wrote Nirad C. Chaudhuri: "Each step and each decision appear to have been an improvisation taken under the influence of an impulse." In 1971, India won but many military strategists feel that considering that we were fighting an army of occupation with the support of the local populace, we took at least three days too long to enter Dacca. Says a high government official: "It became very embarrassing when the army kept missing the dates in its own timetable." Apparently, this delay cost General Arora the job of the chief of staff, which should otherwise, have been his.

In the aftermath of Lanka there is a great deal of resentment over the manner in which the army is being counted on to help solve the regime's political difficulties. This resentment marks a new phase in relations between the army and the government which have generally been business-like and non-controversial

Finally, however, these judgments are academic. The Indian Army may or may not be the finest fighting force in the world, but the real problem is more immediate: can India afford to keep using the army as a gigantic peace-keeping force? The answer seems to be an unequivocal 'no'. The cost to the army is simply too high.

But what is the alternative? The government is already talking about a phased withdrawal from Lanka and a gradual replacement of the army by paramilitary forces on the Punjab pattern. Should this happen, most Indians—and certainly, the army—will welcome the move. But that will not be the end of the problem. Every time there is a domestic insurgency or a communal conflagration that blazes out of control, the cry will still go up: send for the army. And until that changes, the army will continue to pay the price for civilian failures; damaging and diminishing itself in the process. **SUNDAY** 29 November–5 December

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SRI LANKA

A Nation Disintegrates

By Steven R. Weisman

COMMENT

ON AN ISLAND in a pristine lake near Colombo, the capital of Sri Lanka, gunmen guard the sleek new Parliament building, which a terrorist bomb ripped through last August, wounding the Prime Minister and barely missing the President. Downtown, the scattered vacant lots and burned-out buildings are remnants of the riots of July 1983, when hundreds of Tamils were pulled from their homes and burned alive, or hacked to death with axes in the streets.

At the ancient capital of Anuradhapura, the sacred Bo tree — grown from a cutting of the tree under which Buddha achieved enlightenment — is scarred with bullet holes, left from a 1985 attack by Tamil separatists in which 150 Sinhalese died. Throughout Sri Lanka, one sees the saffron robes of Buddhist monks. Traditionally an emblem of peace and tolerance; they have become symbols of militancy and martyrdom — especially after 29 monks were dragged off a bus last June, gunned down by Tamil terrorists and left to die in the dirt.

Near the southern coast of Sri Lanka are blocks of drab concrete dormitories, a Sri Lankan Army camp in which Tamils — a Hindu minority in the country — are interned and, according to Amnesty International and Tamil spokesmen, regularly beaten, tortured and sexually assaulted. Farther up the coast is the burned-out shell of a house owned by a local minister, now occupied by a platoon of Sri Lankan soldiers whose task is to subdue Sinhalese terrorists, members of the island's ethnic majority who oppose any accommodation with the Tamils. (A map is on page 85.)

In the north and east of Sri Lanka, Indian troops patrol in jeeps and trucks — part of a 20,000-man foreign army that has joined the war against the Tamil guerrillas. In the once-bustling trading city of Jaffna, shattered storefronts and hollowed-out houses testify to the bloody days of October, when the Indians laid seige to the city — managing to capture it only after losing more than 200 men.

In Jaffna and other northern towns are enormous posters of fallen guerrilla heroes, their guns pointed into the air. The latest martyrs are 12 Tamils who, after being captured by the Sri Lankan Army in September, swallowed the cyanide capsules that all guerrillas wear around their necks.

When Sri Lanka was still called Ceylon — the change was made in 1972 — the name evoked an alluring paradise of misty hillside tea plantations and Buddhist monasteries, of pristine beaches and elephant sanctuaries. The country was led by one of the most civilized establishments in Asia, patrician heirs to a 2,500-year-old culture. As recently as the beginning of this decade, Sri Lanka was hailed as a model of economic progress and stability in the third world.

Now, after four years of bloody civil war, more than 7,000 Sri Lankans are dead, 500,000 have been routed from their homes and herded into refugee camps, and the island's economy is in ruins. Hopes were raised last summer, when India sent in its army to enforce an accord between Sri Lanka and India to end the war. But the Indian "peacekeeping" troops soon became caught up in their own war with the Tamils, the very people they were meant to protect. Today, Indian troops continue to battle the Tamils in the north and east, while the Sri Lanka Army occupies the south.

In Sri Lanka, there is no such thing as original sin. As with Northern Ireland, the Middle East and other historic areas of conflict, every atrocity is justified as revenge for an earlier outrage. The cycle of revenge has no end because it seems to have had no beginning.

Still, Sri Lanka's disintegration reflects tensions found in many developing countries: the tension between economic development and economic equality, for example, and between a national commitment to democratic principles and an ethnic minority's assertion of its rights. Most lethal of all, perhaps, has been Sri Lanka's inability to balance its assertion of ethnic and religious pride with the ideals of pluralism and secularism.

IT IS NEARLY three years since I first visited Sri Lanka. The Tamil separatists who had been pushing for the establishment of an independent state in the Northern and Eastern Provinces of the island — "Tamil Eelam," or "Tamil homeland" — were already waging a full-scale insurgency.

Nonetheless, the national authorities in Colombo insisted that on Feb. 4, 1985 — the anniversary of independence from Britain — all public buildings raise the Sri Lankan national flag, an order that especially irked people in Tamil areas. In the east coast town of Batticaloa, a place of peaceful lagoons and rice paddies, four gunmen accosted the Gov-

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ernment's chief local agent in his office and made off with a stack of Sri Lankan flags.

Independence Day came, and the Government agent — a Tamil civil servant named Marianpillai Anthonimuthu — made his way to an empty soccer stadium, surrounded by security forces, and defiantly raised the flag. "We recognize we are potential targets," Anthonimuthu told me nervously at the time. "We get no protection. But still we do the job."

Last October, Anthonimuthu was driving in an Indian Army convoy when a precisely timed explosion demolished his car, killing him instantly.

Anthonimuthu was only the most recent moderate Tamil official to be assassinated by Tamil extremists, who accused him of collaborating with the enemy. Sinhalese extremists, who oppose any accommodation with the Tamils, also specialize in assassinating Sinhalese leaders, as demonstrated most spectacularly in the bomb attack on Parliament last August. Since President Junius Richard Jayewardene signed a peace accord with India in July, no less than 50 activists in his ruling United National Party have been listed as murdered.

The image on the Sri Lankan flag raised by Anthonimuthu in that empty stadium nearly three years ago symbolizes the nation's problem. The flag is dominated by a roaring golden lion — the emblem of the Sinhalese majority. According to the most recent census, taken in 1981, 74 percent of Sri Lankans are Sinhalese, 18 percent are Tamil and 7 percent Moslem.

AT ITS HEART, the story of national disintegration is the story of two peoples, two ethnic groups, each feeling increasingly threatened by the other, each driven to take action that can only reinforce the other's fears.

Many say that race is the main source of the conflict. The Sinhalese, most of whom are Buddhist, trace their origins to lighter-skinned Indo-Aryans of Central Asia who migrated to Sri Lanka 2,500 years ago; the Tamils, most of whom are Hindu, are descended from the darker-skinned Dravidians of southern India, who are believed to have arrived slightly later.

In fact, today many Sinhalese are dark and many Tamils light; scholars believe the concept of two separate races is largely myth, that no single race can claim to have possessed the island first. Yet, when I asked a leading Buddhist monk to describe the source of the island's separate identities, he told me it was race. Were the Sinhalese a superior race? "All races feel superior to each other," he answered. "We are proud of our own race, but we don't look down on others."

Yet the Sinhalese, instead of viewing the Tamils as a minority on the island, tend to consider them a dominating majority — backed as they are by the 50 million Tamils living 18 miles away in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu.

The Sinhalese religious mythology contributes to their sense of siege. The earliest Sinhalese records tell how, 2,500 years ago, Buddha sent emissaries to the island to establish a place for his purest teachings. The most sacred place on Sri Lanka is a temple in the old mountain capital of Kandy, where Buddha's tooth is enshrined.

"In this little country, history has given the Sinhalese race the position of being a majority with the characteristic of a minority," explained Colvin De Silva, a Marxist political leader in Sri Lanka. "The Sinhalese nurse this sense of peril, a belief that, like the Jews, history has vested them with a role of maintaining their traditions."

The island's history is the story of Sinhalese and Tamil kingdoms rising and falling, clashing with one another, and together suffering a succession of invasions from the Indian giant to the north. Modern times brought new invaders: the Portuguese, the Dutch, and finally the British, who in 1815 imposed unity on the island for the first time in a thousand years.

Independence came in 1948; in the first flush of hope of a new nation eager to take its place in the postcolonial world, the Sinhalese and Tamil communities managed for a time to submerge their historic antagonisms.

But the potential for conflict was still present; indeed, it had been increased by an important legacy of the departing colonialists. British missionaries, who worried about angering the island's Buddhist majority, found it easier to proselytize among the Hindus in Tamil areas. Many missionary schools were established in Tamil regions, and by independence the Tamils had parlayed this educational advantage, and their passion for hard work, into a dominant posi-

The Tamil minority and Buddhist Sinhalese majority are locked in a bloody cycle of revenge.

tion in Sri Lanka's universities and civil service.

But Sri Lanka's modern political leaders were always upper-class Sinhalese patricians, many from landowning families of the old plantation economy of tea, rubber and coconuts set up by the British. Often more comfortable with the ways of their English colonizers than with their own culture, the ruling families enjoyed privileges because the Crown considered them "natives imbued with the right spirit," as Yasmine Gooneratne, a Sri Lankan literary scholar, puts it in her evocative memoir of one of the most powerful ruling families, the Bandaranaikes.

Mrs. Gooneratne recalls how the families of these would-be rulers traveled to London on ocean liners, wore Western clothes and took pride in their light-colored skin and plummy British accents. Many believed that British rule had essentially alienated them from the culture and people of their own country.

But a change in attitude came with a vengeance in 1956, when Solomon West Ridgeway Dias Bandaranaike was elected Prime Minister. Bandaranaike set out to restore dominance to Sinhalese culture, and his program showed the potential for a tyranny of the majority.

First, Bandaranaike made Sinhalese the sole official language of the nation, an act that was at the root of riots between the Sinhalese and Tamils in 1956 and 1958. Next, his Government imposed quotas on Tamils in the civil service, in the universities and elsewhere in the educational system.

The Government also embarked on a program to develop areas in the north and east of the island, resettling thousands of Sinhalese families in areas the Tamils considered their homelands. Demonstrations, riots and attacks continued; each effort to accommodate Tamil grievances failed. Each side accused the other of killing innocents.

Sri Lanka's difficulties deepened during the 1970's, as its economy sagged. Years of Government flirtation with socialism and increasing economic regulation had stifled investment and growth. It became increasingly difficult for Tamil and Sinhalese youths, even those with an education, to find jobs.

Compounding their disaffection were lingering resentments over caste discrimination, and the fact that leadership positions in both the Sinhalese and Tamil communities still tended to be held by upper-class, landowning families.

Radicalism among the Sinhalese flowered in 1971, when a Sinhalese revolutionary organization called the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (or People's Liberation Front) rioted in an attempt to overthrow the Government. More than a thousand Sri Lankans died before order was restored. Resentment grew among Sinhalese youth, and also among the Tamils.

President Jayewardene concedes, "For the last 20 years there has been some discrimination" against Tamils.

NORTH OF SRI LANka's central highland forests and tea plantations, the scrub jungles give way to sandy flat wastelands on which peasant farmers struggle to grow vegetables, chilis and tobacco. Along the coast of the Jaffna Peninsula, 20 miles from India, are a string of fishing villages that seem a world apart from the playing fields, law courts and prosperity of the capital of Colombo.

Velupillai Prabakaran grew up in one of those fishing towns, the son of a Government land officer. Deeply shy as a boy, he withdrew to read stories about the bravery of ancient Hindu warriors, Napoleon, and Indian fighters. He also learned from his family about atrocities against Tamils, such as the time in 1958 that some Sinhalese broke into a Hindu temple, tied a priest to his cot, poured gasoline on him and set him on fire.

"This left a very deep imprint on my mind," Prabakaran once recalled. "If such innocent lives could be destroyed, why could we not strike back?"

Today, Prabakaran — 33 years old, short, stocky, with a drooping mustache — is the supreme commander of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, a guerrilla organization of perhaps 2,000 men under arms, and with many thousands of supporters. Tamil leaders say that, like the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna among the Sinhalese, the guerrillas have drawn support from young people bitter about lack of job opportunities and resentful of leaders who they feel have been insensitive to their needs.

Known to his men as Thamby, or little brother, Prabakaran has spent most of the last decade underground, and has led his cadres by emphasizing self-sacrifice — symbolized by the cyanide capsules strung around their necks. From his troops, Prabakaran demands discipline, celibacy, adherence to a puritanical code forbidding drinking and smoking, and ruthlessness in battle.

During the 1970's, the nascent Tiger movement carried out robberies and assassinations. But the movement reached a turning point when "the boys," as they are often called, began assassinating elected Tamil leaders who, they felt, had betrayed their people. In 1975, Prabakaran and two other young men ambushed the car of the Mayor of Jaffna and shot him dead.

One midnight late in July 1983, a group of Tigers led by Prabakaran faced the Sri Lankan Army in a shootout and killed 13 Sinhalese soldiers. Shock spread throughout the island; in Colombo and other towns, Sinhalese mobs rioted, burning and killing hundreds of innocent Tamil men, women and children. The riots, in turn, brought new support and momentum for the Tamil Eelam cause.

The pattern has continued, with each new attack bringing on a new retaliation. Sometimes the guerrillas would storm a police station. Sometimes the Sri Lankan Army would rampage through a Tamil town, shooting people, setting fire to houses, rounding up hundreds of young men.

As Tamil militancy spread, mainstream Tamil politicians grew increasingly impatient with Colombo's slow responses to their appeals for justice. In 1983, the Tamil members of Parliament refused to take their seats, charging that President Jayewardene had reneged on promises to grant greater autonomy in Tamil areas.

The Tamil Eelam movement, meanwhile, had split into myriad factions that were soon waging a brutal war against one another. Prabakaran, who had a shootout with one rival in 1982, has been the most aggressive in launching attacks on other guerrilla groups. During the last two years, the Tigers have killed hundreds of men in two other Tamil Eelam organizations, accusing them of drug-running, shaking down merchants, robberies and other "antisocial activities."

THE TROUBLES OF Sri Lanka seem etched in the face of its President, 81-year-old Junius Richard Jayewardene. His is the ravaged countenance of a patriarch whose long career is rooted in a privileged childhood, followed by fiery campaigns waged on behalf of Sinhalese nationalism, and finally the agonizing struggle for accommodation of the last few years. Earlier this year, Jayewardene was asked why he had not moved more quickly to meet Tamil demands. The President shrugged; it was, he said, "lack of intelligence, lack of courage, lack of foresight on my part."

"For the last 20 years, there has been some discrimination," Jayewardene acknowledged in a recent conversation at Ward Place, a spacious bungalow in a fashionable Colombo neighborhood. The house, surrounded by mango trees and frangipani shrubs, has been his family home for more than 50 years. "We have corrected these defects. Of course, there were difficulties of implementation — there always are. But the Tamils were in too great a hurry. They were always being pushed from behind by the terrorists, who for no reason began to kill."

The son of an eminent jurist, Jayewardene, who was called Dick as a young man, was a scholarly boy who played tennis and cricket, studied history and won many prizes for oratory.

In 1977, Jayewardene ran for Prime Minister, promising to revitalize the economy by restoring free enterprise and investment. His victory marked the first time a single party had achieved an absolute majority of the vote. He took advantage of his margin of victory by changing the Constitution, assuming the new position of President in 1978, and winning re-election by popular vote in 1982.

Jayewardene's critics say he exacerbated the country's divisions by blocking a new parliamentary election and, instead, pushing through a voter referendum that will keep in place the Parliament elected in 1977 until at least 1989. Although he claimed the referendum was essential because leftists were plotting to overthrow the Government, there were widespread charges of vote rigging, and many diplomats say the President simply seized on Sri Lanka's turmoil as an excuse to subvert the country's once-lively democratic processes.

TO BRING AN END TO SRI Lanka's conflict, Jayewardene had to recognize the reality of India's involvement. For years, Sri Lanka had complained that India had provided sanctuary for and even training to the soldiers of the major Tamil insurgent organizations at bases in south India. The complaints were ignored, partly because the aspirations of Sri Lankan Tamils have long enjoyed great sympathy in the huge southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu and its capital, Madras. According to reports in the Indian press: years ago, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, seeking to shore up her own political support in Tamil Nadu, had authorized Indian intelligence agencies to assist the Tamils directly.

After Mrs. Gandhi was assassinated in 1984, her son and successor realized that the Sri Lankan insurgency might threaten the stability of southern India itself. Rajiv Gandhi had reason to be apprehensive about the possibility of an Indian-supported separatist movement succeeding in Sri Lanka. Among other things, his own attacks on Pakistan for supposedly aiding Sikh separatists in India began to look increasingly hollow as New Delhi uneasily rode the back of the Tigers.

In 1985, Gandhi declared that he was unequivocally opposed to the establishment of Tamil Eelam, and pledged to try to mediate a political compromise. The talks among the Tigers and Sri Lankan and Indian officials sputtered along for two years, gradually narrowing disagreements about how the island should be governed.

Last summer, the sudden success of the Sri Lankan Army forced India's hand. After years of military bumbling, the 30,000-man military had transformed itself — with some training and other assistance from several Western countries, including Israel — into an effective fighting force that for the first time seemed capable of achieving a military solution to the conflict.

During the last year, the Government forces managed to drive the Liberation Tigers out of much of the north and into the Jaffna Peninsula.

Last spring, Sri Lanka decided to try to finish the job, attacking the Tigers with helicopters and planes. In India, defenders of the Tamils cited news reports that hundreds of civilians were being killed, and accused Jayewardene of committing genocide. Gandhi intervened, airlifting 25 tons of food to besieged Tamil areas — in effect signaling Jayewardene that India intended to prevent him from crushing the Tigers by force.

The Indian action created a major crisis in Jayewardene's Cabinet. Hardliners demanded the Sri Lankan Army continue the assault on Jaffna. Doves warned that might provoke an Indian invasion. The Sri Lankan Army chief of staff feared India might ship shoulder-launched antiaircraft missiles to the guerrillas, letting them shoot down Sri Lankan planes and helicopters. Without air cover, he said, Sri Lanka would have to abandon its effort to oust the Tigers from Jaffna.

Presiding over a fractious Government, Jayewardene seized Gandhi's offer to work out a compromise. "I don't mind giving in to India, I could not give in to Prabakaran," he recalled, referring to the Tamil guerrilla leader.

Under the accord signed by

Gandhi and Jayewardene last July 29, Sri Lanka agreed to grant greater political autonomy, including some local control of police and security forces, to Tamil areas in the north and east. In return, India persuaded the guerrillas to begin surrendering their weapons to the Indian Army.

But Sinhalese extremists were furious at what they saw as the de facto creation of Tamil Eelam. As Gandhi reviewed troops on a visit to Colombo in July, a Sinhalese sailor tried to club the Indian Prime Minister with the butt of his rifle. A few weeks later, the bomb exploded in the Sri Lankan Parliament.

Government authorities blame the resurgent People's Liberation Front, the Janatha Vinukthi Peramuna, for the Sinhalese reaction. The front appears to have dropped its old Maoist rhetoric and taken up a nationalistic credo of Sinhalese identity under siege. According to Sri Lankan officials, the front has a wide following among trade union members, students, Buddhist monks, policemen and soldiers.

Despite the threat of Sinhalese reprisals, Jayewardene persuaded Parliament to fulfill the accord with India by granting limited political autonomy to Tamil areas. Whether the President can succeed in calming the Sinhalese majority, and quieting the misgivings in his own Cabinet, now depends on the Indian Army — and whether it can enforce peace in the north and east, then leave the island quickly.

THE ACCORD HAD one fatal shortcoming — it was never signed by the only party in a position to guarantee its success, the Tamil guerrillas. Prabakaran called it a "stab in the back," even while he pledged to turn over his weapons to the Indian Army. He felt compelled to yield to India's considerable leverage — its ability to cut the rebels' supply lines, as well as Gandhi's promises of protection for the Tigers.

In September, the accord broke down. The Sri Lanka Navy, patrolling north of the island, stopped a suspicious-looking boat and found 17 heavily armed Tigers on board.

The Government charged that because these Tigers had not disarmed, they were not entitled to amnesty and must be conveyed to the prison camps in the south for interrogation. Among the guerrillas was a long-sought prize — the alleged mastermind of the massacre of 127 bus passengers in April. Rather than face what they said would be "certain torture" in the south, all 17 Tigers swallowed their cyanide capsules. Twelve died. To Prabakaran, their suicide was dramatic proof of India's failure to protect his men. The Tigers resumed their attacks on civilians, then began attacking Indian soldiers.

Gandhi knew that his army must respond, or else Jayewardene would order the Indian troops from the island. Gandhi authorized his army to disarm the Tigers by force — only to discover the limits of such force in a guerrilla conflict.

Already this fall, more than 250 Indian soldiers have been killed and nearly 1,000 wounded. The guerrillas strike, then melt away. Their losses have been serious, but they remain able to attack throughout the island. "It will take years for the Indian Army to round us up," a guerrilla leader boasted recently.

India, meanwhile, is learning the necessity of winning over hearts and minds, and developing an alternative civilian Tamil leadership willing to stand up to "the boys." Both tasks are proving extremely difficult.

The Tamil public seems to feel resentment toward the Indian Army; toward the Tigers they seem to feel a mixture of intimidation and respect. Tamil politicans say that though the Tigers might not win an election, they are widely admired as heroes whose stubbornness and sacrifices ultimately protected Tamil rights. Moderate Tamil politicians are thus reluctant to freeze them out of the process. And if they tried, they know they might be killed.

"We must face the fact that the Tigers can carry on their guerrilla war for a long time," said Appapillai Amirthalingam, leader of the Tamil moderates. "The only hope is for them to join in a political settlement. Instead, Prabakaran has overplayed his hand. He has brought this tragic situation on all of us."

Yet despite India's early offer to let the Tigers dominate an interim administration and even to oversee elections, Prabakaran continues to fight. After years of ruthless combat, years of hiding underground, the solitary guerrilla leader, many people say, has come to distrust politics and to fear for his life. He knows that rival guerrilla groups have targeted him for assassination. A journalist close to Prabakaran called him a "haunted man" trapped by a "paranoid" vision of the world.

"He sees the ghosts of his own men who died for a cause he cannot betray," said the journalist. "and he sees the ghosts of the men he has killed who want revenge."

TODAY, VENGEFUL ghosts are everywhere in Sri Lanka. Perhaps the carnage could have been prevented; perhaps, had the moderates compromised earlier, they might not have lost control of events to the extremists, whose killings gave birth to the revenge-tragedy, which continues to feed on itself.

How long can it go on? Whether New Delhi can sustain its involvement in Sri Lanka has become a matter of debate throughout South Asia, where India's other small neighbors watch with growing apprehension. Despite the heavy losses in men, Indians appear to support their country's intervention. Even in the southern state of Tamil Nadu, opinion polls show that the people want the Tigers to accept the sovereignty of their island nation.

Still, it is possible to imagine that Sri Lanka will be permanently wounded. Already, people are whispering the unthinkable — that India may be unable to leave for many years, that it could finish by annexing the north and east of the island, following the precedent set by the ancient south Indian kingdoms that invaded the island more than 1,500 years ago.

The Tigers, too, are haunted by this history, seeing themselves as fulfilling the destiny of other ancient Tamil rulers in Sri Lanka — just as the Sinhalese look on themselves as heirs to their kingdoms of old.

It is a paradox that what hope there remains in Sri Lanka may spring from a new spirit of national identity that has been spurred on by India's intervention. In private and in public, Tamils and Sinhalese agree on one thing — they don't want to be dominated by India. One even hears a kind of perverse pride voiced by many Sinhalese in the Tamil guerrillas' fierce resistance to the Indian Army.

How could peace be secured in Sri Lanka? Economic development must somehow be shared more equitably, avoiding the overlay of feudalism and caste; a national culture must be nurtured that threatens neither people.

But, finally, the only way Sri Lanka will achieve unity is by revising its view of history, by somehow rescuing the future from the gravitational pull of the past. ■

Understanding Sri Lanka

RGK

OPINION

I have long been itching to write on Sri Lanka. But I have felt intimidated by the great quantities of matter already churned out by the media on the subject. To write perceptively on Sri Lanka it is not enough to base oneself on newspaper reports or on the views expressed with varying degrees of eloquence by editorial writers.

The Sri Lanka problem must be studied from all possible angles. It is to start with an internal question for the natives of the Island to tackle. The second question to consider is whether we have been unwittingly dragged into an issue that is for the Sinhalas and the Tamils to solve among themselves. Why is the Tamil issue of great concern to us and how is it that the Sri Lanka authorities have agreed to our part in finding a solution to it whether or not wholeheartedly?

One of the cardinal mistakes most of us make is to regard the Tamil question of Sri Lanka as an ethnic problem. The term ethnic is difficult to define and I don't think the Sinhalas and the Tamils are ethnically vastly different. Indeed they have a common racial and cultural heritage and the differences they represent are not different from those of people in India.

A second mistake is to view Sri Lanka as a problem that strictly concerns only Tamil Nadu. The government of India must be able to view it in a wider perspective. In other words the objective must be not to appease this or that lobby in Tamil Nadu but to tackle the Sri Lanka question independently of the changing scene in Tamil Nadu. I am afraid the Prime Minister and his foreign policy aides are unable to see the problem in Sri Lanka as that of a persecuted minority. They refuse to look at it outside the framework of the views of M.G. Ramachandran and his supporters.

In my view, the problem of Sri Lanka is basically religious and linguistic. It has been created by Buddhist fundamentalism. We usually associate the teachings of the Sakyamuni with gentle yellow-robed monks meditating on the Buddha and the Bodhisattavas. The Theravada Sinhala Buddhists have obviously strayed from the middle path and taken a violent, extremist view. They cannot tolerate the existence of a community other than their own, speaking another tongue or practising another faith. The idea of any part of the Island being dominated by the Tamils is repugnant to these extremists. Indeed, their ultimate objective is to make Sri Lanka exclusively Buddhist and Sinhala-speaking.

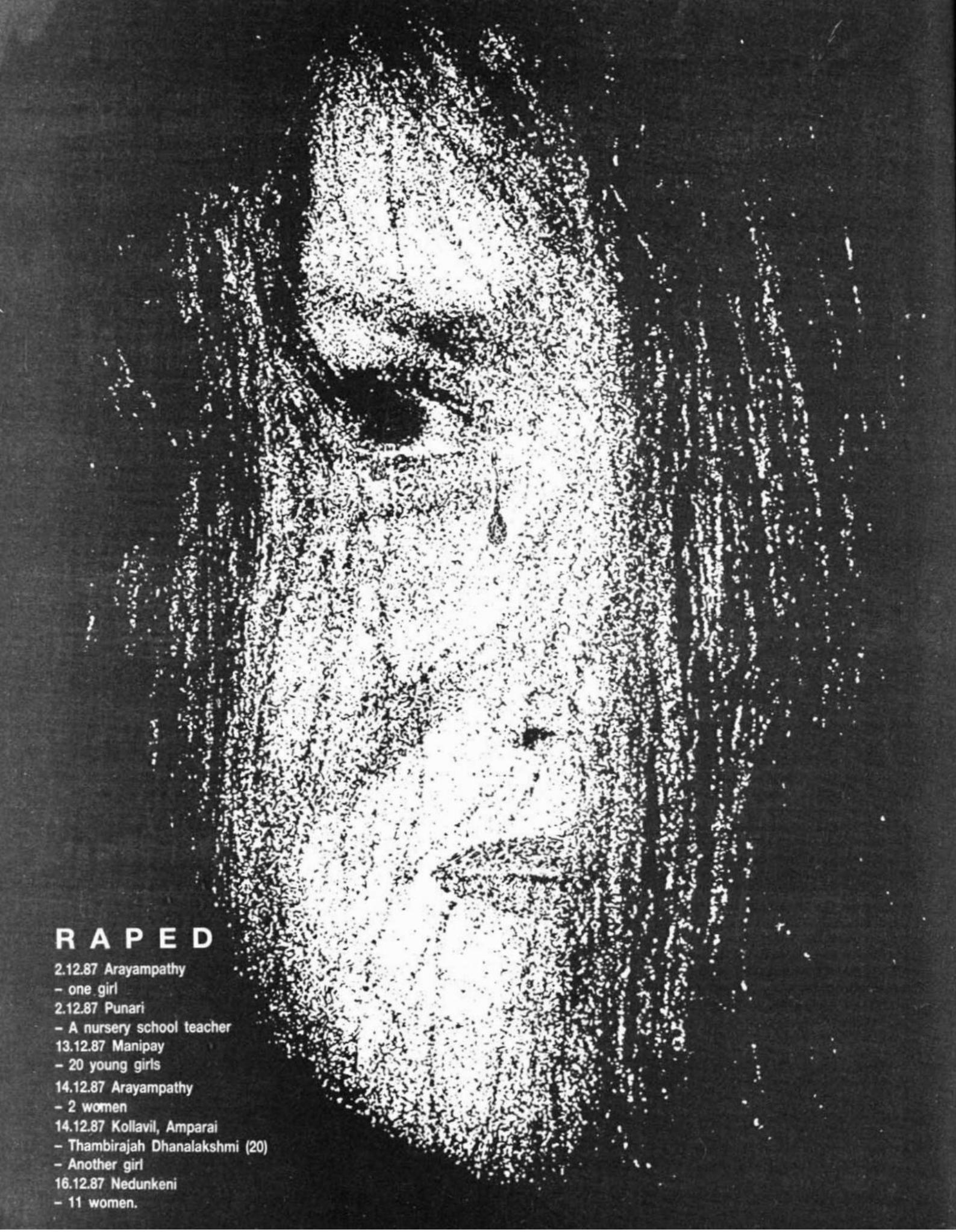
One additional point must be made here. The Sinhalas are in some psychological fear of the Tamils. It is here that Tamil Nadu comes in. Recent decades have witnessed the rise of a Tamil nationalism in India. The so-called Dravidian movement has fuelled separatism in India and created the awareness that the Tamils are the proud inheritors of a distinctive culture. Jaffna is regarded by most Tamils in India as an outpost of the Tamil imperialism of the past. Rightly or wrongly, the Sinhalas fear that one day the island will be engulfed by a wave of Tamil resurgence. The fear of course is unrealistic but we must reckon with it in any discussion of the Sri Lanka problem. I am also prepared to concede that during British rule the Tamils had the upper hand in Sri Lanka. (I am forgetting for the time being the indentured Tamil labour from India that sweated for the prosperity of the island. These Tamils constitue a different problem.)

> **"The problem has been created by Buddhist fundamentalism. The ultimate objective is to make Sri Lanka exclusively Buddhist and Sinhala-speaking."**

Most of us in India recognise that JRJ is among the world's most astute politicians. Our own statesmen and diplomats are like infants before him. I personally distrust JRJ's rhetoric, his frequent appeals to Buddhism and his attempts to go back to the springs of Indian nationalism. But there is no doubt that he is anxious to settle the Tamil question in his lifetime. I wouldn't say the same about other Sinhala politicians. They would like to prolong the struggle in the island and it is likely many of them are engaged in undermining the understanding arrived at between Rajiv Gandhi and Jayewardene. We must also bear in mind that politicians like Sirimavo Bandaranaike will be far more unsympathetic to the Tamil cause than JRJ.

There is the wider geopolitical factor to consider. Sri Lanka is ideally situated for being the hunting ground of foreign powers. A Sri Lanka in which the superpowers acquire a foothold will be a serious threat to our own country. It is claimed that the New Delhi-Colombo agreement has the effect of fending off greedy neocolonial powers. There is some merit in the claim.

But the Indian presence in Sri Lanka is not something about which we should be proud or we can be proud. This is not the sort of peacekeeping job that we had been expected to do. The Tamil guerrilla forces are not easy to quell though I concede that Prabhakaran is no Tamil Giap. The Indian action is likely to inflict a deep wound in that section of the Tamil population which is against the agreement. And how long are we going to be on the peace-keeping job? There has been a serious failure of diplomacy on our part. And also a failure to understand the real dimensions of the problem.



R A P E D

2.12.87 Arayampathy
– one girl
2.12.87 Punari
– A nursery school teacher
13.12.87 Manipay
– 20 young girls
14.12.87 Arayampathy
– 2 women
14.12.87 Kollavil, Amparai
– Thambirajah Dhanalakshmi (20)
– Another girl
16.12.87 Nedunkeni
– 11 women.

Sri Lanka

REPORT

Paradise as Hell

***Gerard Peres** reports on the continuing Indian army offensive in Sri Lanka. Also an account of the outlawed Sinhala militant organisation, the JVP.*

THE preamble of the Indo — Sri Lankan peace agreement states that India has all the respect for the sovereignty of the island-nation. What does this really mean? In this clasic case of doublespeak, this means that India has all the right in the world to devour the island-nation to protect the loftiest of ideals — peace, security of the region, and of course, "national interests".

What else can be made of the full-fledged starting of radio and television programmes by the Indian government in the North and the East of the island? Though the programmes are said to be for the "valiant" Indian soldiers, this is cultural invasion of the worst kind. Moreover, the Indian government has refused journalists, human rights activists, Christian missionaries entry into the "occupied zone", under the pretext that their security cannot be ensured. Also, the tantrums of Army officers and I & B officials during the visit of Madras-based journalists to witness the release of 18 Indian soldiers by the LTTE show the true nature of "invasion and occupation".

Well, the invasion may become complete once India takes true cognisance of the "threat" to the South. This regional policeman role, played to super perfection by the Indian government, may assure itself and the middle-class citizenry of its "self-righteous" presence in Sri Lanka. And those fierce "anti-imperialists" in the Congress and the parliamentary left paties may also gloat over the Indian role in Sri Lanka, which augurs well for "world peace and peaceful co-existence of nations".

Meanwhile, as phone calls, news reports and frantic messages sent through couriers reveal, the Indian armed forces have resorted to the most unspeakable of brutalities against the Tamil people. And they are poised to repeat the show with other communities of the island, as the "going berserk" of an Indian soldier in Trincomalee last week has revealed. This was the first accepted incident of an Indian soldier killing Sinhalese and Muslims, numbering six. More such incidents, which would bear out as to what the Indian government is upto in Sri Lanka, are likely to be admitted in due course.

As to the war with the Liberation Tigers, the Indian government has perhaps decided that the Indian army cannot be kept at rest. The drama of ceasefire was enacted primarily as a media event, to wrest the initiative from the Tigers who released 18 Indian soldiers unconditionally in a true gesture of peace. Interestingly, the set of nine demands put forth by the Tigers for laying down of arms includes declaration of an indefinite ceasefire by the Indian government. This must

Behind the Bars

● Total number of political prisoners (Tamils) released after the July 29 peace agreement	1600
● Total number of Tamil political prisoners yet to be released by the Sri Lankan government (including women)	3000
(The release of detenu stopped on the first week of September. The Sri Lankan government has said it would launch prosecution against 3000 persons. No response from Indian government).	
● Total number of Sinhala political prisoners in Colombo jails (JVP suspects)	1000
● Total number of Tamil militants arrested between July 29 and Oct 9 by the Indian army and the Sri Lankan army ...	not less than 100
● Total number of Tamil militants arrested after the Oct 9 offensive against Tigers (most arrested as suspects and sent to Andamans)	1000
● Total number of Tamil militants kept inside Tamil Nadu jails (some for political purposes and others for petty crimes etc.,) — most of them belong to PLOTE, ENDLF, TELO, and EPRLF all of which support the agreement.	200
● Number of Sri Lankan Tamils held in Tihar Jail, Delhi.	50

have insulted the Indian leadership, which thinks that it alone can decide the meaning of war and peace, security and insecurity, truth and falsehood, and what not in this wretched South Asian region.

As to the agreement "guaranteeing" the rights of Tamils, it would lapse by itself. And everyone including the Sri Lankan president knows this, except our high-flying world-knowing Prime Minister... The agreement, he thinks, is the only way the Indian army can be kept in Sri Lanka, which may shortly be converted into a set of military bases... The basis for this military dominance, if it does not come from the agreement, can be brought by a security treaty between New Delhi and Colombo.

This scenario, coupled with the fact that the entire Tamil Nadu coastline has been militarised beyond recognition, is extremely distressing to all democratic-minded citizens both in Sri Lanka and in India. (Except the parliamentary left parties who stand for "world peace and peaceful co-existence between nations".) News reports in the local press reveal that Indian fishermen have been barred from fishing after a stretch of two km from the coast. Some of them who did not stick to the security "guidelines" were taken to the naval camp in Kayts - one of the islands off the Jaffna peninsula - and tortured by the Indian naval personnel... A clean repeat performance by the Indian navymen of what their Sri Lankan counterparts had been doing for the last several years...

There are innumerable such reports from across the Palk Straits. As a Madras-based militant leader put it across, "it is an occupation zone. Nothing which happens there shall reach the world. If it reaches the world ever, the world would ignore the voice in distress."

All militant groups, including those which supported Indian offensive against the LTTE, are keeping their fingers crossed. The ball, they feel, is not with the Tigers as is widely believed. The Tigers now are a beleaguered lot, willing to sit for peace talks. It is India, which is not interested in a tripartite talks, consisting of the Sri Lankan government, the militant and moderate groups and the Indian government, which would ensure a really long-term solution keeping out India both militarily and politically. Also, the Sri Lankan government has manoeuvred itself out of having to hold any talks with the Tamils.

The True Toll

THE toll of the dead and wounded during the Indian offensive, according to independent sources and calculations :

Tamil people	(dead)	1,300
	(wounded)	4,000
Indian soldiers	(dead)	1,200
	(wounded)	3,000
LTTE members	(dead)	125
	(wounded)	300
Total number of people rendered refugees		4,00,000

REPORT

Letter to PM condemns IPKF

letter from Ms Angela Hesse of the Tamil Solidarity Group in West Germany to Mr Rajiv Gandhi asking him to immediately stop military attacks by the Indian Peace-Keeking Force in the Tamil regions of Sri Lanka.

The following is the text of the letter:

"With much concern and shock we are following the military offensive of your army in the north and east of Sri Lanka Although you yourself initiated a "peace accord" with the Sri Lanka President, Mr J. R. Jayewardene, your troops now enforce cruel, inhuman actions against the Tamils in Sri Lanka

"By this you are carrying on the oppression of the Tamil Minority of which you yourself have accused the Sri Lankan Government only a few months ago and which left more than 6,000 dead more than 2,000 'disappearances' and thousands of destroyed buildings.

"Although foreign observers are hindered to enter the fighting places, we received news that there is a high number of casualties among the Tamil civil population. The use of heavy artillery, the brutal rape of Tamil women and the blockade of essential supply lines give evidence that the actions are not only meant to liquidate the resistance fighters but are also directed against all Tamils who are struggling for their self-determination

"We are even more shocked by your behaviour in the Tamil conflict, because as a leader of the Non-Aligned Movement you spoke for the freedom and self-determination of peoples and against repressive regimes like the one in South Africa

"We ask you to stop military attacks on Tamil regions immediately, to enforce the disarmament of the Sinhalese Home Guards to stop Sinhalese colonization of Tamil homelands, to give the north and east of Sri Lanka to Tamil self-determination and to advocate for the immediate release of the 5000 Tamil political prisoners as it was affirmed under the accord".

8.12.87

LETTER

Citizens' Committee
Mullaitivu District 7th Dec 1987

The United Nation's Secretary General
The U.N.O.

Your Excellency,

It is with great concern and dismay that the people of Mullaitivu District, a part of the Northern Region of Srilanka wish to urgently make known to the United Nations high command and to all people who love democracy, freedom and fair play about the incidents and the intolerable violation of human rights now being perpetrated on our people. The behaviour of the Indian Peace Keeping Forces (IPKF) has been highly reprehensible, atrocious and shocking, with a far cry from the situation screened up by the Indian embassy at Colombo.

The great Indian Democracy to day, now' is increasingly considered by our people of having the greatness for strategic suppression of people even beyond its borders, its action very much in conflict with its declared objective of erasing the miseries, affecting the Tamils of Srilanka. We give below a few instances to illustrate clearly the present condition prevailing in the North and East of Srilanka and chiefly to draw the attention of the world to the dire and urgent necessity to rescue the Tamil people of Srilanka from their present plight. These incidents refer to what has happened or what is yet happening in the Mullaitivu district.

1. The people of the villages of Mulliyawalai, Watrapalai, Thaneerootru, Nedunkeni, Pilawathai, Pudukudiiruppu and Oddusuddan were forced to vacate their villages and flee into the jungles and live there for days before they were able to conquer their fear of the IPKF and commence seeking asylum in other places, sometimes as much as 40 miles away, before being caught by the ferocious and inhuman attack of the IPKF on innocent villagers without any notice or even a modicum of provocation. This even raised the fear among our people that some of the attacks may have been made while the soldiers were under the influence of drugs, as there seems to be no other explanation for their uncivilized and savage onslaught.

2. On their search operation the IPKF drag out people from their homes and march them on the public highway (with their hands directing the sky) for even as much as 3 miles, in the meanwhile beating and kicking them, in effect to cause maximum humiliation. Random groups of people were left gathered in the fear of the moment without even a preliminary enquiry and subjected to the atrocities of the IPKF men. Respectable government servants (teachers included) and even elderly women have had their skull torn by receiving blows with sticks fitted with blades. Equipments in homes were destroyed before the eyes of the inmates and valuables lost. In short the people of whole villages were terrorised and forced to flee their houses.

3. The people left behind in these villages the old and infirm were beaten or shot to death. On one particular day 4 of them, aged over 60 years, were shot. In another incident, a patient under treatment for snake-bite at Mullaitivu hospital was forcibly removed from the ward and interned at the IPKF Camp.

4. Hospitals at the major population centres have been incapacitated by the IPKF. Those at Mulliawalai, Nedunkeni and Pudhukudiiruppu are now non-functional as a result of shelling by the IPKF helicopters. Hospital buildings have been damaged and the medical staff have left for parts unknown. Even private dispensaries are now deserted in these areas. There is a serious dearth of medicine for the control of ravages of Malaria and diarrhoea now rampant among these displaced people.

5. In the meanwhile, the IPKF is continuing to shell villages, indiscriminately and unnecessarily causing heavy destructions to lives and properties and their military helicopters are functioning efficiently to judge the havoc and destruction caused.

6. The foremost temple in the district, the Vattapalai Amman Kovil and its immediate surrounds received 17 shells in a single day from the IPKF camp at Mullaithivu causing much damage to the main building. Similar damage has been caused to the Alambil Murugan Kovil, schools, market places and other public utilities have also received damage due to the same cause — mortar or artillary shelling.

7. Under the pretext of unearthing the weapons of the LTTE, the IPKF have outraged ordinary citizens with their method of search. The old and especially the parents of youths are subjected to bear methods of search which are disturbing and are very humiliating. In short the goodwill the IPKF is supposed to have towards the general Tamil population they have come to serve and protect, is nowhere to be seen in their action.

8. Transport services have been disrupted with the IPKF firing (the excuse for practice) on even stationary buses. In two instances, a bus load of passengers were fired upon with no reason or rhyme. These buses are state owned. Though the president of our country is no longer ruling us, he seems to have abdicated the vital function, one of which is to safe guard us as citizens of this country with a basic human right to live. Perhaps the IPKF is indulging in activities to terrorise and ultimately subjugate our people who have already suffered enough. The people of Mullaithivu, especially living away from the town are deprived of sufficient food and medicine due to the disruption of the transport services and also due to their having fled far away from their homes without being able to take along with them basic necessities of lives. An urgent relief operation has to be mounted to save the majority of these people from starvation and possibly death. From the behaviour of the IPKF, it is evident that they suspect all people of being in support of the LTTE. (That is any Srilankan Tamil is the prime suspect.) If so whom are the IPKF trying to save from or from us? The need to rescue our people from the present calamity is for the United Nations, to send a representative to study the situation on the spot. The Indian government and its representatives in Colombo (as usual they are adept at lying abroad for their country) are acting and are capable of nullifying our appeal with the fund of make belief and propaganda. They are great in these activities too. Even before they commenced their inhuman attack on our people, they commenced no less than 3 radio programmes to deceive them in the name of 'love' and 'peace' (India's broadcasts for our people have been named 'Nesakarangal', 'Anbu Vazhi' and 'Vetrimalai'). The present real activities of the IPKF as opposed to the Indian declaration of the good faith by the Tamil people of this country displays the premeditated objective (unknown to us and known to them only) in which the well being of our people is taking a back seat. Our people are now beginning to believe that the declared intention of the Indian Government is merely an eyewash and certainly what they have sent over to our country is no Peace Keeping Force. The IPKF is innocent of anything peaceful. But our people are now appealing for the truly Peace Keeping Force—a body duly approved and appointed by the world body to over see our rehabilitation and see what are the necessary and desirable accomplishes as the one imposed on us at present does not prevail.

Hence we appeal to your honour and to the world organisation to extend a hand to succour and hope to a destituted and hopeless section of humanity.

Hoping to obtain immediate redress and relief, we remain,

Yours sincerely
Sd.....

K.K. KATHIRAVELU
The Secretary of Citizens' Committee of Mullaitivu

The Week

REPORT

A SIGH OF PEACE

Will LTTE return to the negotiating table?

INDEPENDENT India's longest war, though undeclared, ended, at least temporarily, at 7 a.m. on November 21. It ended as abruptly as it began on October 9. Never before had Indian forces been bogged down for so long though in the Sri Lanka operations circumstances were different. More important, they were sent into action by an inexperienced political leadership.

New Delhi ordered the IPKF to cease fire for 48 hours. This conciliatory gesture came within 24 hours of the release of 18 Indian soldiers by the LTTE. However, this seems to have been in response to an earlier appeal by the LTTE for a 48-hour ceasefire.

The appeal, made on November 1, was routed through former Jaffna municipal commissioner and LTTE confidant, V. Sivagnanam. Sivagnanam's message to the IPKF commander noted that any solution at this stage without the LTTE will not be a long-standing solution for the people of Jaffna. The Tigers have gone underground and they will keep fighting. It asked for a ceasefire for about 48 to 72 hours to give the Tigers a chance to come to the negotiating table.

Further, Sivagnanam said that he was confident that LTTE would surrender arms and if it failed to do so after the ceasefire, the people of Jaffna would chase the LTTE men and kill them.

The reaction of the government of India was that it did not know whether the LTTE was a party to the appeal. Said an official spokesman then: "If the LTTE makes a categorical statement to hand over arms and abide by the Indo-Sri Lankan agreement, we will certainly consider the offer." The truth was that in those days of anti-LTTE frenzy no one in the government was prepared to make a move which might help the LTTE even indirectly. Even Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.G. Ramachandran's appeal to Rajiv Gandhi "that the request of the LTTE through Sivagnanam for a truce for 48 hours may please be agreed to" went unheeded.

The background to the Indian army's offensive against the LTTE is well known. Such was the intensity of the army operations that all three services had to be pressed into action. And despite the disadvantage of unknown terrain, and fighting a virtual counter-insurgency war for which they were ill-trained, the forces gave a creditable performance though they suffered heavy casualties in the process. But they obviously could not have carried on in this fashion indefinitely and something had to be done to prevent more casualties to the IPKF, whose strength had swelled to nearly 30,000 men by the time the ceasefire was announced.

There were many appeals for a ceasefire in between from a number of friendly quarters. But none was acceptable to the Indian government till the evening of November 20. The reason for the stubborn stand was apparently that Rajiv Gandhi had felt let down by the LTTE leadership and his apparent desire that they should be taught a lesson. Overnight in south block and in the Prime Minister's office, moderate officials became hawks.

So much so that Rajiv Gandhi, in his utterances, began sounding more and more like President Jayewardene. Rajiv's announcement in Parliament that the IPKF would remain in Sri Lanka as long Jayewardene wanted embarrassed foreign ministry officials, who advised Natwar Singh not to make any such remarks in his statement in the Parliament. And in the rush to paint the LTTE with the blackest brush, many stories were planted. One was that the LTTE used to collect money from retail dealers of foreign liquor amounting to Rs 28 lakh per month. It was no wonder then that in those days no sincere appeal was entertained.

Within a fortnight, however, Delhi was in a more accommodative mood. In the afternoon of November 20, newsmen were alerted that there would be a statement on Sri Lanka by Minister of State for External Affairs Natwar Singh in Parliament. His announcement of the ceasefire, had an unmistakably harsh tone to it.

Said Natwar Singh: "The people in the areas now under IPKF control are beginning to emerge from their nightmare. They realise that they no longer need to fear for their lives, or to live under coercion. They are beginning to come forward to point out LTTE arms caches to the IPKF; there are reports that in some areas they have prevented LTTE operations. All this has helped the IPKF.

"Perhaps realising that they no longer represent the wishes of the people, a number of LTTE personnel have become disillusioned, surrenders are taking place, and there have been indications that increasing number of the LTTE cadres now realise that there is no future in a continued and futile confrontation with the IPKF.

"Faced with the resentment of the people of Jaffna, who are unwilling any longer to countenance LTTE obduracy, and in the face of sustained IPKF pressure, they have now released the 18 IPKF soldiers in their custody. This is a positive development and is a vindication of the policy followed by (the Indian) government, of firmness, coupled with a willingness to keep the door open for negotiations."

Finally Natwar announced: "A number of well-meaning people, who have been in touch with the LTTE leadership, believe that the LTTE needs a little time to hand over its weapons and declare its support to the Indo-Sri Lankan agreement. These sentiments have been echoed in the House. In response, the government has decided that, for 48 hours, starting from 7 a.m. tomorrow, the 21st November, the IPKF will not open fire on its own initiative."

The move for a unilateral ceasefire was set in motion on October 19, following the release of the Indian soldiers. First there were informal discussions between Defence Minister K.C. Pant, Cabinet Secretary B.G. Deshmukh, Defence Secretary S.K. Bhatnagar, Foreign Secretary K.P.S. Menon, Army Chief K. Sundarji and chiefs of the intelligence agencies. The consensus seems to have been in favour of a 48-hour ceasefire. When informed, Rajiv Gandhi too agreed.

Now, the official stand is that India

never wanted to break the LTTE, but only wanted it to bend. The government would never like to alienate the Tamils of Sri Lanka. Nor did it want to humiliate the militant leadership. What it wanted was that the Tamil militants should lay down arms and once that was achieved, the democratic process of setting up the provincial council could begin.

When the LTTE chose to hand over the captured Indian soldiers, New Delhi responded positively. The idea was to find out whether there was a change of heart among the LTTE leadership. If normalcy could be restored through negotiations, India was all for it.

It was even hinted that the IPKF knew where the LTTE leaders were stationed and that it could have destroyed them if it wanted. Rather, New Delhi wants LTTE chief Velupillai Prabhakaran and Ajit Mahatiya, his deputy, who are in Chudumalai and Moolai areas and political leaders like Balasingham, who is in Vadamarachy, to deliberate on the accord and take a final decision. As an official who preferred to be anonymous said, "if they agree to cooperate, we will only be too ready."

Another consideration of the Indian government was that the LTTE had of late been adopting a conciliatory approach as evidenced by the release of the soldiers. To top it all, New Delhi had received intelligence reports that the LTTE leadership was plagued by dissensions. It seized the opportunity to offer peace.

These developments apart, domestic reasons too seem to have played a hand. First, there was growing tension in Tamil Nadu following the Centre's rigid stand on the appeals for a ceasefire. Tamils, specially in Tamil Nadu, were feeling that the Centre is prejudiced against them. What is more, even AIADMK leaders gave open vent to their feelings. Valampuri John, MP, spoke of the "deadly strain" put on the Indian Tamils' sense of belonging to the nation.

DMK chief Karunanidhi's campaign against India's Sri Lanka policy was having its impact among the masses. Two young Tamils committed suicide. Even some Congress(I) MPs felt that ceasefire was the need of the hour. At least one party MLA conveyed the ground realities to Rajiv Gandhi.

Even outside Tamil Nadu, discussions in the drawing rooms were invariably on the military operations. For whom are we fighting for? many asked. "We were told that Indian army has gone to Sri Lanka to protect Tamils. Now our army is killing Tamils. Why?" That was the common refrain. They were not willing to listen to the official talk of strategic compulsions and big power rivalry.

Even in defence services clubs, messes and barracks, the operations came to be questioned, especially after the IPKF casualty rate started going up. They very logic of fighting this undeclared war was under fire. There was also fear that the IPKF might end up fighting an unending guerrilla war, because there was every sign that LTTE would go underground rather than surrender. It was noted that such a committed organisation would never give up—visions of Jaffna turning into another Ireland or Beirut. The best way out, it was felt, was to call a ceasefire and negotiate an end to the conflict.

Interestingly, the attitude of the Sri Lankan leadership also helped Delhi make up its mind. The utterances of Prime Minister Premadasa and some of his cabinet colleagues on the accord made the Indian leadership realise that it wouldn't be advisable to embrace the Sinhalese and ignore the Tamils totally. Continued operations would have turned the Tamils into sworn enemies. Signs were already visible. Velupillai Prabhakaran had already approached the United Nations. The letter appealed to the UN secretary-general to use his good offices to urge the government of India to call off the military offensive and seek a solution by peaceful negotiations.

Prabhakaran's letter showed the bitterness of the Tamil Tigers towards India. At the same time, Sinhala leaders, barring perhaps Jayewardene, too harbour such feelings towards India. At least some senior officials felt that it is not wise to trust the Sinhala leadership. Some foreign office mandarins also felt that by offering a ceasefire, at least a section of the Tamil leadership could be won over. New Delhi was also worried that its adversaries may raise Prabhakaran's letter in international forums.

Many attach significance to the date of the ceasefire announcement. It was on the day Soviet Premier Nikolai Ryshkov arrived in New Delhi. A few days earlier, a senior Soviet official spoke to an Indian leader on the need to temper force with kindness in such operations. This suggestion may have been a subtle message or a friendly advice, but the ceasefire came within a few days.

—K. GOPALAKRISHNAN

Sudhir Dar, The Hindustan Times, 5.12.87

The Telegraph

COMMENT

Centre must declare an immediate ceasefire in Lanka

By Nikhil Chakravartty

6.12.87

This week the Indian armed forces would be entering the third month of their military operation against the militant Tamils in Sri Lanka. In duration this is the longest operation that the Indian Army has undertaken since independence. And that too in a country beyond the frontiers of India.

When the Prime Minister of India signed the agreement with the President of Sri Lanka on July 29, 1987, the assumption both at home and abroad was that while President Jayewardene would be honouring the commitments on behalf of the Sri Lanka government, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi would see to it that the elements confronting the Sri Lanka government among the Tamils of Sri Lanka, carried out the terms of the agreement, concerning them. This was broadly India's commitment since the Tamil leaders of that country, both militants and moderates, were for historical reasons supposed to have been under India's influence, having close ethnic affinity with the public in Tamil Nadu.

Nonetheless, this was indeed an unusual agreement. Even at that time, many wondered why Rajiv Gandhi chose to be a signatory to this agreement, since strictly speaking, the two parties directly involved in the conflict at that time were the Sri Lanka government and the Tamil groups in the island—that is the Jayewardene administration on the one hand, and the Tamil groups on the other, and the foremost among them, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). At best, India could have underwritten an agreement between the two parties.

Under this agreement, the Government of India went on further to offer "military assistance" to the Sri Lanka government to implement the proposals. While the text of the agreement promised Indian "military assistance," the annexure turned it into "an Indian peacekeeping contingent" to be called by the President of Sri Lanka to guarantee and enforce the cessation of hostilities.

The euphoria generated over the agreement was largely because it was felt on all hands that it would bring peace in a strife-torn country, and secondly it would ensure the long-desired devolution of powers to the Tamil-dominated region. In New Delhi, it was further given out that the agreement averted the imminent danger of outside forces being called in by Jayewardene in desperation. Hindsight makes it abundantly clear that nobody at that time had any clear idea of the far-reaching commitments made by Rajiv Gandhi who at a public meeting in Madras four days later ecstatically declared: "It is an agreement without precedent in history. It is an agreement which does not have a parallel in the world. It is an agreement which puts into practice the ethical ideals of Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru and Indiraji."

All this sounds so bizarre in the situation that prevails today. The agreement was supposed to ensure peace and security for the Tamils in Sri Lanka. Instead, what we are witnessing today is that nearly two divisions of the Indian armed forces have been engaged for two months in full-scale military operation—by land, sea and air—in the very area where the Tamils dominate, resulting inevitably in large-scale destruction and dislocation, which brings neither peace nor relief but misery and deprivation to the hapless civilian population.

The plea that all this devastation would not have descended upon the Tamil area had the LTTE leadership not gone back on its word, betrays an amazing lack of assessment of the situation on the ground when the agreement was signed. As is now clear, the Government of India had no close rapport with the Tamil militant leadership nor of its military strength and capacity despite the fact of their having been active for more than three years under its protection. In fact, the Tamil Nadu chief minister, a political ally of Rajiv Gandhi, has always been a high visible supporter of the LTTE, and there is no reason whatsoever for the Rajiv government to plead now its innocence of the LTTE's strength, influence and policy.

Even on the question of surrender of arms, Rajiv Gandhi had received no prior assurance from the LTTE leadership when he signed the agreement with Jayewardene which explicitly stated that the process of surrendering of arms would be "completed within 72 hours of the cessation of hostilities coming into effect" which in turn would be effected "within 48 hours of the signing of this agreement." That is, within 120 hours of the signing of the agreement, the Indian Prime Minister formally assured that all arms would be surrendered by the militants.

Yet on the very same day, a little after the signing of the agreement at Colombo, Rajiv Gandhi during his joint press conference with Jayewardene, admitted that "we are still talking with them (the LTTE)." Which means the Prime Minister of India had received no firm commitment from the LTTE about its surrendering arms when he actually signed the agreement which enjoined the surrendering of arms within 120 hours.

This is not the only example of amazing lack of homework before any major decision is taken in New Delhi nowadays. It is this total absence of serious in-depth approach which

has dogged every step of the Government of India in the very complex situation in Sri Lanka that has landed it in a mess today. If the so-called peacekeeping force has become a misnomer as it has been engaged in military combat, the fault certainly does not lie with our armed forces which have a proud record of discipline and fighting mettle, but with the political leadership which seems to use it with cavalier irresponsibility.

What is the upshot of this grotesque incompetence at the highest level? The very Tamil population for whose protection India is supposed to stand, is now faced with the hazards of a war situation. The Army which was sent there to look after the people, finds itself facing an embittered populace. And the grim prospect before this Army is to meet the challenge of a desperate guerrilla bond in an alien environment. By this act of folly on the part of the government, the military action which was supposed to preserve the integrity of Sri Lanka, has in effect hardened the desperation of the secessionist forces. Any objective assessment of the situation on the ground today is that the trend towards an independent Eelam has been hardened, rather than weakened, by the Indian military operation.

What is to be done now? Some of the government's critics have raised the demand for the unilateral withdrawal of the Indian Army from Sri Lanka. This is by no means a solution: rather this will be as hazardous in its political fallout as the continuation of the present military operation.

The solution to this crisis lies in firmly going back to the political process. The sage counsel that New Delhi was offering Colombo six months ago, namely that the use of armed force would bring no solution as there could be no alternative to a political settlement, is applicable today with greater effect on New Delhi's own policy perspective. Having reached a totally blind alley, it is not surprising that one hears in the capital that the Indian armed forces might have to stay in Sri Lanka for more than a year, and also that the LTTE has to be liquidated in a fight to the finish. Both are signs of political insanity.

Spelt in specific terms, the Government of India has to declare an immediate ceasefire. It has to take the initiative in sending an all-party delegation to Sri Lanka. The emphasis has to be on the all-party national character of the delegation. Such a delegation must proceed to Jaffna first, talk to all concerned groups including the LTTE and establish the much-needed rapport. Volunteers of all those interested in the promotion of good neighbourliness must be sent in thousands to stay in the northern and eastern provinces as an effective *santi sena*. The all-party delegation must then proceed to Colombo and impress upon all political parties the urgency of conceding real devolution of powers to the Tamil region. No longer dependent on the whims and fancies of President Jayewardene but building bridges with the entire national spectrum of Sri Lanka politics. All this cannot just be a one-shot affair. There has to be sustained united endeavour on the part of all our political parties on this score. Then and only then will be built the necessary infrastructure which can replace the decision by arms that the government has been grievously mistaken in resorting to at present.

The dangerous domestic fallout of the military misadventure in Sri Lanka can be minimised only at the cost of our national unity. Not surprisingly, the temper of the public in Tamil Nadu has changed beyond recognition in the last four months, particularly since the military operation in Jaffna. From the chief minister downward, the overwhelming public demand is for cessation of military operations in the Tamil area. This temper can hardly be ignored or flouted. It has to be respected as a matter of urgency. For far too long New Delhi has been fed by wrong reports by its cronies and agencies. What is needed today is a bold re-appraisal and initiation of a new policy-perspective guided by wisdom. Time is running out on both sides of the Palk Strait.

At Navatkuli in the Jaffna peninsula, Brig. J. S. Dhillon displaying weapons seized from the LTTE..... substantial haul.

Locally made rocket launchers at Navatkuli (above) and AK-47, A-3 and G-3 rifles at Palaly, all seized from the LTTE by the IPKF..... a deadly assortment.

ACHIN VANAIK

IPKF IN SRI LANKA

FOR WHOSE SAKE?

Why has India embroiled itself in a Vietnamesque situation in Sri Lanka? Is it because the prime minister wanted to divert the nation's attention from the controversies enveloping him, as some commentators have speculated? Or is the objective altogether different?

In its anxiety to emphasise its hegemony in the region, says Achin Vanaik, the Indian government has displayed disdain for Sri Lankan sovereignty and international morality.

All nations with larger ambitions justify their foreign policy in the name of such well-worn cliches as 'preserving regional stability'. In most cases this is just a way of dressing up the naked pursuit of a nation's own interests in the garb of some 'altruistic' larger interest for the region in question, or even the world. India's rationalisation for its behaviour in Sri Lanka today is no different from what one is more used to hearing from Washington or Moscow. The American ambassador who tells senior Indian journalists that the US approves of what India has done and that this country was now 'coming of age' ie assuming the so-called 'responsibilities' of a big power, hit the nail on the head.

Supporters of the Indian *imposition* of the India-Sri Lanka accord and the military decimation of the LTTE, belong to two categories which of course, do overlap to some extent. There are, first, the cynical realpolitikers who have delighted in the display of what they would consider the much delayed assertion of India's 'natural pre-eminence'. They are unencumbered by any moral notions of what is just, but happy enough to use rationalisations which pass muster or succeed in persuading the public about the 'rightness' of the Indian 'cause. Then there are those who actually convince themselves that what India is doing is both necessary and just, ie in the best interests of the Sri Lankan Tamils themselves.

It is this hypocrisy and self-delusion that must be stripped away. With the cynical realpolitiker who says tough luck to the Sri Lankan Tamils but Indian interests (as defined by the Indian state) are paramount, there is little to argue about except to state one's opposition and hostility to the Indian action. But at least the lines are then drawn clearly and one is spared the spectacle of being fed one deceit after the other and asked to swallow them in the name of patriotism!

Whenever a conflict situation emerges, the most important thing is to establish who the principal victims are. Situations may be so complex that it is not always possible to unambiguously establish this. In the case of Sri Lanka, however, there is no such problem. The Sri Lankan Tamils are the principal victims just as the governments of Sri Lanka (whether headed by Jayewardene or Bandaranaike) have been the main victimisers responsible for institutionalising social, economic and political discrimination against the Tamils for some three decades.

Elementary principles of justice *and* democracy demand that it is the interests of the principal victims that are considered *paramount* and not those of any other actor in the drama, be they the 'deluded' Sinhalese masses, the Indian government, the Tamil Nadu government or even the Tamil masses in India. The point is not that these interests should not be considered or 'reconciled', if possible, with those of the Sri Lankan Tamils, but that they can *never* be elevated above those of the latter without betraying basic principles of political justice and democracy.

What is more, those interests must be expressed by the Sri Lankan Tamils themselves through their own representative bodies. These bodies may be 'good' or 'bad'. Others may certainly disagree with what one or the other of these bodies demands. It is perfectly legitimate for others, eg the Indian government to seek to persuade the Sri Lankan Tamils and any or all their representative bodies to adopt what it thinks is the 'right' course, or to politically support one representative group over another. But this form of behaviour is fundamentally different from the *imposition* of views by those who are not the principal victims of political injustice on those who are, even if the former have all kinds of urgent interests in resolving the conflict in question in their favour. That is to say, it is *wrong* to forcibly deny or curb *the exercise of the right of Sri Lankan Tamils to define their own political future.* This can of course, only be done through their *own* representative organisations.

It is vitally necessary to state these basic principles because not a single serious commentator has denounced the Indian government for its stand on Tamil Eelam. The point again, is not that the Indian government should support this concept. It is free to oppose it and has reasons for doing so, some good, others bad. The essential point lies elsewhere. How can India arrogate to itself the right to declare that it will never tolerate Tamil Eelam's existence? If the majority of Sri Lankan Tamils decide through their representatives that they cannot live with the Sinhala chauvinist regime in Sri Lanka any more, then one can seek to persuade them otherwise. But by what right can the Indian state say to the Sri Lankan Tamils in effect—"regardless of whether you want Tamil Eelam or not we will never allow it to happen"?

The answer is obvious—by the 'right' that more powerful countries always assign to themselves to defend their interests even if it means overriding the rights and interests of those who are the principal victims of the affair or issue in question. In this arrogant assertion of Indian interests as *primary* lies the seed of a basic intolerance and contempt for the Sri Lankan Tamils which can then surface (and has) at other levels, in other ways.

It should not altogether have been a surprise then that subsequently the Indian government *imposed* an accord on *all* the Sri Lankan groups including the TULF. When the LTTE opposed both the accord and the fact of imposition, the Indian state self-righteously justifies crushing them for not ultimately going along with an accord that was imposed upon them in the first place!

But before going on to examine why New Delhi went in for such an accord and why, as Prime Minister Premadasa memorably (and accurately) put it, the one-time "protectors have become the hunters" of the LTTE, it is necessary to disabuse oneself of the notion that New Delhi has anything but the most shallow and cynical concern for the Sri Lankan Tamils themselves. For reasons of space only the following propositions will be listed.

1 Throughout the three decades of steady institutionalisation of discrimination against the Sri Lankan (and plantation) 'Indian' Tamils by Colombo, New Delhi had done nothing concrete to help them despite their 'ethnic' and geographical proximity.

2 Indeed in 1964 the Indian government signed a disgraceful Shastri-Sirimavo pact which legitimised the refusal of Colombo to give citizenship to all 'Indian' Tamils born in Sri Lanka but endorsed the repatriation of a large number of them to India in exchange for others being enfranchised.

This deal was in fact cited in the early seventies by Martin Webster, a leader of the fascist National Front in Britain (and other supporters of Enoch Powell) as a valuable precedent in their campaign for compulsory repatriation of British residents of Asian origin in the UK.

Colombo, however, did not live up fully to their side of even this shabby bargain. They did not enfranchise all the people they promised to. One of the minor and generally unremarked upon clauses of the latest accord in fact whitewashes this failure by Colombo by agreeing to a further repatriation of 'Indian' Tamils.

3 The Indian government only began to seriously express concern for the 'tragic plight' of Sri Lankan Tamils when the refugee exodus began and the issue became a serious factor in domestic politics; it also developed larger foreign policy ramifications for India, through the growing struggle for self-determination by the Tamils, including the more increasingly voiced demand for Tamil Eelam.

4 The Rajiv government for most of the period when it was seeking to act as a 'mediator' showed a definite bias towards Colombo. It pushed for negotiations at Thimpu last year regardless of whether all the Tamil groups would be present or not. It attempted to deport Chandrahasan. It systematically promoted the 'moderate' and more 'acceptable' (to Colombo) TULF until even New Delhi had to acknowledge that the LTTE had become the dominant force in the Tamil resistance..

While the airdrop of supplies in Jaffna was a clear signal that it would not allow Colombo to have a 'military solution', New Delhi consciously refrained from arming the guerrilla groups in a manner (eg with anti-helicopter/aircraft missiles) which would have enabled them to seize the military initiative.

5 The Indian government dropped the role of 'mediator' to sign an accord without reference to the Tamil groups and has now proceeded to carry out Jayewardene's 'dirty work' of crushing the only indigenous force capable of effectively resisting the military might of the Sri Lankan army *now or in the future.*

While New Delhi has sought to disarm by force all representative groups of the oppressed Tamils, it has never sought to disarm in like manner the principal victimisers.

Why has New Delhi plumped wholesale for this accord? Why has it dropped like a hot brick its earlier role as 'mediator'? Why has it gone way beyond the terms of the accord to crush the LTTE? The accord only demands that the Government of India give the Government of Sri Lanka "such military assistance as and when required." Instead, the IPKF has taken over the complete military campaign, from establishing the objective (total decimation of the LTTE as a fighting force) to deciding the scale and scope of the campaign at various places and points of time.

The terms of the accord itself cannot be an explanation. The minimum demand of even the TULF for permanent administrative merger of the northern and eastern provinces is not guaranteed but made contingent on a referendum in the eastern province in which a majority (Sinhalese plus Muslims) would most likely vote against the merger. Incidentally, this majority was created by Colombo's policy of deliberately promoting land colonisation in the eastern region by the Sinhalese.

To be sure the referendum can be postponed, but only by the Sri Lankan President. It would be ludicrous to presume that Jayewardene can be guaranteed upon to indefinitely postpone such a referendum. In the light of all that has so far happened it would also be utterly naive to believe that the Indian government is determined to secure the 'best' interpretation of this accord as distinct from merely seeing that the letter of the accord is 'faithfully' implemented. Statements from both New Delhi and Colombo have now made it clear that the former does not want the IPKF to stay longer than it has to ie after finishing off the LTTE, and that the latter will call for the IPKF to leave after it has 'done its job'.

So what was the Indian government really after? The prize New Delhi was seeking was not this rag-tag of an accord, but the letter

exchanged between the two prime ministers, which is appended to the accord and is now apparently to be formally incorporated in it. This letter commits Sri Lanka not to enter into relationships with third countries in any way (whether it is leasing Trincomalee or setting up a transmitter), which India might see as detrimental to its interests. This is, in effect, a partial Monroe Doctrine! It represents a ceding of Sri Lanka's sovereign rights in favour of India which, for example, neither this country nor Pakistan would ever dream of emulating with respect to another neighbouring country. Clearly Jayewardene took this step with American urging, ie the US signalled its disinterest in the Trincomalee 'card'.

This partial Monroe Doctrine is a huge prize, far more important than the accord itself and represents a decisive step forward in the process of India establishing its regional hegemony. This process is an objective fact, not a matter of subjective conjecture. It is a process which has involved steps which can be seen as 'just' (and defended as such) as well as others which are patently 'unjust' (and should be opposed as such). It is enough to enumerate the basic historical landmarks of this process—the political incorporation of Indian Kashmir, the liberation of Goa, the attritional warfare against the insurgents of the north-east (especially the Nagas), the dismemberment of Pakistan in 1971 (formation of Bangladesh), the Pokharan explosion of 1974, the search for an India-Iran regional power axis between 1973-78, the Indian (and CIA) involvement in the post-Mujib coups in Bangladesh in 1975, the absorption of Sikkim in 1976, the contingency plans to militarily take over Kathmandu if ever necessary (only a fool would believe these don't exist), the decision to allow political refuge to Tamil guerrillas fighting a government with which New Delhi has friendly relations, and finally the India-Sri Lanka accord and the IPKF action.

The year 1971 was the first decisive turning point in this process of India establishing its 'natural preeminence'. After two inconclusive wars with Pakistan, India in 1971 decisively and irreversibly altered the relationship of power between itself and its principal regional rival in its own favour. This accord is the second decisive turning point—for the first time ever, India is acting as guarantor of civic peace in a neighbouring country with the 'consent' of the ruling regime. The Indian state has, in effect, agreed to help the Jayewardene government to get the upper hand in its domestic conflict with the LTTE in return for the Sri Lankan President's dramatic concession in the realm of foreign policy. This is the *essence* of the bargain represented by the new India-Sri Lanka relationship.

Certain voices in the Sri Lankan government, eg the land development minister, Gamini Dissanayake, have raised their objections to the partial Monroe Doctrine, ie the terms of the letter. But this only suggests that even the big powers have difficulty in ensuring that Monroe Doctrines endure. Certainly in the case of the US it no longer does. But the basic point remains—big powers search for their versions of the Monroe Doctrine or Brezhnevite 'limited sovereignty' and are prepared to sacrifice others' interests in pursuit of this self-interest which is then justified in the name of 'regional stability' or 'larger interests' or whatever.

The reversal of the Indian attitude to the LTTE also required rationalisations from the apologists for New Delhi's actions. The LTTE it is said, is by its nature bad for the 'genuine' interests of the Sri Lankan Tamils. This may be true. But it is for the Tamils to determine what are their best or genuine interests and who should represent them. And the Indian state's opposition to the LTTE is primarily motivated not by concern for these interests but for its own, in the pursuit of which it will 'sup with the devil himself'. For if the LTTE is now to be characterised (not wrongly) as a highly militarised body guilty of anti-Sinhalese terrorism and chauvinism and of vicious intolerance towards other Tamil groups, how then is one to characterise the Sri Lankan governments which by their *deeds* against the Tamils have behaved far more criminally than the LTTE?

In fact till early 1986 when Colombo embarked on the 'military solution', the LTTE was nowhere in the picture. It was the TULF that was the best known body with the best claim to being the strongest representative group. The LTTE gained its popularity and stature at the expense of the TULF by being the most resolute defenders of the Tamil people's physical and material well-being in the face of Colombo's brutal assault. One must not forget this fact even as one condemns the LTTE for repressing the other guerrilla groups to the detriment of the Tamil resistance as a whole.

The reaction to injustice cannot be morally equated with those responsible for it in the first place. This is not the first time that brutal repression engenders a brutal opponent which nevertheless represents a crucial bulwark against this repression. The rise of the Khmer Rouge in the face of the USA's brutal repression of Kampuchea is another example. But would anyone with any empathy and solidarity with the oppressed Kampuchean masses of that time have demanded that the Khmer Rouge be crushed by an external force while US bombing and repression of that country was going on? Is it legitimate to demand that a 'nasty' representative group of the victims be punished to the point of elimination when there is no comparable punishment of the victimisers? Yet this is what is being demanded in Sri Lanka today.

The LTTE opposed the accord, then flirted with the idea of co-operating with it. They then raised one objection after the other till New Delhi decided they had to be 'taught a lesson'. The LTTE's reluctance to co-operate with India and Sri Lanka can be put down to a combination of at least four factors: a) frustration at an imposed accord; b) desire to overwhelmingly dominate the interim council; c) uncertainty about sustaining their power and influence in a civilian set-up; d) distrust of Sri Lankan and Indian bona fides behind the drawing up of the accord and with

respect to the terms itself. Whatever their failings, the LTTE had every reason to hold these fears. Why should the bona fides of Sri Lanka and India be trusted? And certainly LTTE behaviour with respect to the accord can in no way justify the IPKF action.

More extreme characterisations of the nature of the LTTE that have appeared in the media have only served by their very timing, as well as their content, to justify the iniquity of New Delhi's behaviour. These characterisations not only let the Jayewardene and previous Sri Lankan regimes 'off the hook', so to speak, for their brutal and institutionalised repression of Tamils, but contrary to their purpose they only serve to further highlight the hypocrisy of New Delhi's actions. For if the LTTE is so terrible why was New Delhi willing to give it a place, let alone a dominant one, in the interim council? Why is New Delhi even now willing to let the LTTE come into the 'political process'?

Time and again, appeals to nationalism and patriotic feeling have been used by governments and their supporters to silence critics or to alienate the wider public from them. This time is no exception. And even the critics of what the Indian government is doing have been afraid of seeming 'unpatriotic'. That is why their criticism has been put forward on the ground that India's own interests are not served by what it is doing in Jaffna ie that the situation will turn out to be India's 'Vietnam'.

In this context it is more than ever necessary to assert that it is not India's interests that are paramount and that need defending, but those of the Sri Lankan Tamils *as defined by them.* India's behaviour in Sri Lanka must be opposed not so much because it means this country might sink more into some political 'quagmire', but because what India is doing is *wrong,* indeed reprehensible. It is the Sri Lankan Tamils and their representatives who are paying a most painful price for the perpetuation of this injustice.

DECEMBER 6, 1987

EDITORIAL

22.12.87

THE COST OF WAR

The hasty Indian rejoinder to President Jayewardene's claim that nearly 700 Indians had been killed in the military operations against the LTTE has not set at rest widespread fears in this country that the cost of taming Mr Prabhakaran's bellicose Tigers is becoming increasingly unacceptable. The Sri Lankan President may have his own compulsions for suggesting that the IPKF will complete its military task within the next 45 days—it may be recalled that he had earlier identified August 15 as the date of withdrawal—but the recent attacks mounted on IPKF camps in the Eastern Province, and the LTTE's warning that it will "eliminate" all other rival Tamil groups, indicate that this optimism is based on an incomplete understanding of the prevailing military situation. True, the Indian forces have demolished most of the LTTE's known military bases in the Jaffna peninsula and are now engaged in a similar operation in the Batticaloa district, but the task of weeding out the insurgents from the expansive stretches of Vavuniya, Mannar, Trincomalee and Amparai districts may be far too hazardous to be completed by the end of January. What has really complicated the situation is that the IPKF has been unable to obtain any form of civilian assistance, the brutal retaliatory tactics of the Tigers offering only a partial explanation for this failure. The muted protests by Professor S. Vithianathan, the Vice-Chancellor of Jaffna University, and the TULF leader, Mr A. Amirthalingam, at the "atrocities" allegedly committed by the IPKF may help to explain why the liberators of yore have been transformed into an army of occupation in the eyes of most Tamils.

It is also interesting that criticism of the Lanka misadventure within India is no longer confined to Mr M. Karunanidhi and the DMK. Mr Jyoti Basu's recent demand that the Government come clean on what exactly is taking place across the Palk Straits may be a fairly accurate indication of Indian public opinion. The ultimate irony, of course, is that the perceived beneficiary of the military intervention, President Jayewardene, has himself been pushed into a very tight corner. The belligerence with which the outlawed JVP spurned Colombo's offer to return to normal politics may not only be an indication of Mr Rohan Wijeweera's commitment to adventurist politics, but a pointer to the mood of the Sinhalese. Nor is it without significance that President Jayewardene has not been able to extend support for the Indian military presence within his Cabinet beyond the charmed duo of Mr Ronnie de Mel and Mr Gamini Dissanayake. The opposition of the Prime Minister, Mr R. Premadasa, is, of course, well known, but Mr Lalith Athulathmudali's guarded statement that while the "objectives" of the Indo-Sri Lankan accord "make sense", its "methodology and procedure raise a lot of controversy", suggests that the formidable chauvinistic lobby in the ruling UNP is not yet reconciled to President Jayewardene's unilateral manoeuvres. In a nutshell, the problems of the ethnic conflict do not appear to have diminished since July 29. New Delhi's conduct hardly inspiring confidence in either Jaffna or Colombo. As for opinion in this country, the question that is foremost in everyone's mind is: Whose war are we fighting in Sri Lanka?

AFFIDAVIT

ALVAPILLAI SOMASUNDARAM (48)
N.I.C. No. 40360230X Karkia Walavu,
Puloly East, Point-Pedro

The deceased Somasundaram Vishnupalan (16) is second son. He was a student in Grad. 9 of Velautham Maha Vidyalayam.

At about 9 p.m. on 4.12.87 our area surrounded by the Indian Peace Keeping Force Personnel.

When IPKF personnel tapped on our door I opened the front door.

At this time my wife and children were in the rear section.

Wnen my wife opened the rear door I.P.K.F personnel who were in the rear compound shot dead my son S. Vishnupalan who was inside the house.

The dead body of my son Vishnupalan was taken away by the IPKF.

The dead body of my son was traced to Manthikai Govt. Hospital and was removed from there on 8.12.87 at about 10 a.m. with the permission of the IPKF as a full day curfew was in force.

The dead body of my son S. Vishnupalan was cremated the same day 5.12.87 Aanaivilunthan cemetery.

PONNIAH NAVAMANY (59) Viyavilan South, Viyavilan.

The deceased Suppiah Ponniah, aged 70 years was my husband.

He was a farmer at the time of his death.

On 4.12.87 a shell fired by the army fell on our roof and exploded.

My husband fell unconscious immediately due to the shock and passed away few hours later.

We cremated his body the next day.

I have got a daughter deserted by her husband who is now a dependant of mine.

I find it very difficult to maintain my family as there is no income after my husband's death.

VIGNESWARAN GANDHI ALIAS MAHARANI (34) widow, 13/1 Malar Mahal Veethy Ariyalai.

The deceased Nallathamby Vigneswaran aged 42 years was my husband.

On 4th. December 1987 at about 8.00 p.m. my husband complained about acute heart pain.

Due to the curfew which was imposed from 5.00 p.m. till 6.00 p.m. we could not take him to the Hospital.

I along with my husband's sister, brother-in-law and a woman from the neighbourhood went to the nearby army camp with a white flag.

We pleaded with the soldiers to grant permission for taking my husband to the Hospital.

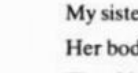
They refused to give permission and advised us to take him to the Hospital in the morning.

My husband expired at about 3.00 a.m. without receiving any medical help.

He would have survived if we had taken him to the Hospital immediately, as it was his first heart attack.

I have six children

After my husband's demise we are undergoing untold hardships as we do not have any income.



I. KANDASAMY SIVARAJADURAI (26)
R.C. Lane, Manthuvil, Kodikamam.

My brother Kandasamy Pulendran, age 20 years a bachelor, my two sisters and I were living in our own house at the above said address.

We have lost our father and mother long ago due to sickness.

On 6.12.87 at about 2 p.m. my brother left for our garden closeby to water chillie plants.

At about 3 p.m. Indian Peace Keeping Force surrounded our area and state Firing at random.

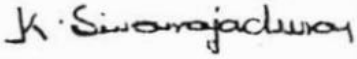
At above 6p.m. K. Moorthy a relative of ours who went to his farm came home and informed that my brother was shot and killed by the IPKF in our farm.

I rushed to the farm as the IPKF had left our locality and brought the dead body home with the assistance of our relations.

The dead body of my brother bore an injury in his chest.

Cremation took place on 7.12.87 at noon at fluvan cemetery.

My un-married sister and lost the only earning member of of our family.



KANTHASAMY PUSHPARANEE (41) Seppukaddi, Alvai West, Alvai

The deceased Sithamparapillai Kandasamy aged 46 years was my husband.

On 7.12.87 at abo 9 p.m shell fell within our house compound and exploded.

My husband sustained on deep injury on his shoulder joint caused by a flying shrapnel.

He lost his consciousness following excessive bleeding.

We could not take him to the hospital due to the tension prevailed during those days.

He died on 10.12.87 without regaining his sense.

His cremation took place at Tikkam cemetery on 11.12.87.

I lost a son on 31.5.87 when the security forces dropped of incunding bombs on Thulapilliyar Kovil Thikkam where we were taking refuge.

I have a son aged five years.

We do not have any income after my husband's tragic death and undergoing tremendous hardships.

SINNARAJAH THANGAMALAR, (40) Madathadi, Sirupiddy North, Neervely.

The deceased Selvanayagam Navaratnam, aged 42 years was my elder brother.

He was a farmer.

On 7.12.87 at about 3.30 P.M. there was a conformation between the army and the militants near my brother's house.

At 4.30 P.M. I came to know that my brother and his wife were killed after being caught in the crossfire.

I rushed to my brother's house and found his body lying in the courtyard.

It bore a gaping wound on it's neck.

My sister-in-law's body was found about 75 yards from her house.

Her body bore a gunshot wound on its stomach.

The eldest child Yasotha is under my custody maintenance and care.

The fact that my brother surrendered at the IPKF Camp was witnessed by Mr. Muthulingam, President of the Citizens Committee of Inuvil.

My brother was removed from the IPKF Camp to the Marthanamadam I.P.K.F. Camp on 31.12.87. People who saw my brother being taken gave this information to me.

On 1st January 1988 my brother and I went to the said Camp and inquired about my brother.

We were asked to come the next day.

On 2.1.88 my mother and I went to Maruthanamadam IPKF Camp at about 8.30 A.M. and inquired about my brother.

We are asked to wait. At about 1 P.M. my mother and I were taken into the camp and shown my brother.

My mother and I found my brother. We spoke to him. He said that the IPKF had promised to release him in three days time. He wanted some clothes to be brought. I and my mother were with my brother for about 30 minutes.

He did not appear to bear any signs of assault.

On 3.1.88 my mother and I went to the IPKF Camp and asked for permission to see him. We were told to come the next day but the clothes we took for him were taken by the soldier.

On 5.1.88 my mother and I went again to the IPKF Camp. This time to we took some clothes. The clothes were taken by a soldier but we were refused permission to seem him as the soldier said that my brother was being interrogated. Said that my brother was being interrogated.

We went every other day thereafter but was refused permission everytime. On 13.1.88 when my mother and I went, were were told not to come and that we would be sent a letter after my brother's interrogation was over.

On 16.1.88 a boy named Nithiyananthajothi alias Periyarasa said to be a member of the "Three - Stars" militant group came and told us that my brother was seriously ill at the IPKF Camp.

My mother, my two sisters and brother and I rushed to the IPKF Camp Maruthanamadam and asked to see my brother.

There we were told that my brother had died. Two senior Officers of of the IPKF asked us whether we wanted the body or whether we wanted them to dispose of it.

We undertook to remove the body home. When we asked how my brother came by his death we were told that the time had come for him to die.

The body was handed over to us at 3 P.M.

We brought the body home and examined the body.

We made the following observations :

(a) The left arm was dislocated at the shoulder.

(b) The left shoulder joint was swollen.

(c) There were blackened stripe marks the whole length of both arms (people who saw this said these were the effects of electric burns)

(d) On both legs there were lacerated wounds.

(e) On his back also there were lacerated wounds.

The Gramma Sevaka (Village headman) came for the funeral as he was rather pally with my brother.

A boy who was held in the same camp as my brother came and told us that soldiers with boots used to trample over the body of my brother while he was in custody.

That before my brother died he had been so subject to electric shocks and beatings that he had become nearly blind.

We were unable to get a certificate of death in respect of my brother's death as the Gramma - Sevaka (Village headman) though he attended the funeral and was also pally with my brother was afraid to state the real cause of death and because the IPKF itself had given a certificate relating to the death.

The IPKF sent us a certificate regarding the cause of death of my brother which we do not believe in so far as the cause of death is concerned. A copy of the certificate is annexed hereto.

As a result of my brother's death my widowed mother and brother and sisters are left without any maintenance and support.

My late brother who was the only wage earner of the family was in receipt of a salary of Rs. 1000/- P.M. as watcher for Village Council, Uduvil.

The dependants are :-

(a)	Kanagalingam Parameswary (50)	– Mother.
(b)	Miss. K. Patheerathy (25)	– Sister.
(c)	Miss. K. Kanthavadivu (20)	– Sister.
(d)	Miss. K. Lingeswary (19)	– Sister and
(e)	Mas. K. Kuhanathan (13)	– Brother.

My mother is very ill after untimely death of my brother and is therefore unable to come and make this statement.

MRS. NAGESWARY NAVARATNAM widow (55) Alukkai, Aleveddy North, Alaveddy.

The deceased was my son Navaratnam Naguleswarn, a bachelor aged 27 years earned an income of Rs. 1000/- per month by running a tea boutique at Alaveddi.

I have 5 children of whome 2 are sons and 3 are daughters on whom a son is married and lives separately.

My late son Naguleswarn left home at 7.00 A.M. on 30.12.87 on a motor-cycle to his tea boutique as usual.

At about 7.30 A.M. a neighbour came house and informed me that my son Naguleswarn had been shot dead by an unknown uniformed person at chempadu which is half a mile away from our house.

The dead body was brought home by my relationes at 8.50 A.M. in a tractor and the cremation took place at 1.00 P.M. the same day at Mellakam cemetery.

I observed a severe bullet injury on my son's head.

THARMALINGAM SARASWATHY (34) Thikampurai Vasavilan.

The deceased person Ponnan Pali, aged 61 years widow was my Aunt.

My aunt adopted me after her children's death.

She was living with me until she met her tragic demise.

On 30.12.87 our area was the target of intensive mortar and artillery shelling.

At about 2.00 p.m. a shell fell in the next compound and exploded with a thundering noise.

Through fear we fled from the House to Selvanayagapuram leaving my aunt who refused to accompany us due to her old age.

On 31.12.1987 I was informed that my aunt was killed in a shell blast on the previous day on the wake of our hurried departure.

On hearing the grave news my husband went back to our house and brought her body in a bullock cart with great difficulty.

She had three shrapnel wounds on her head.

Her body was cremated at the Pillayan Kandu Cemetery on 31.12.87.

She was under my care and maintenance till her death.

NEWS ANALYSIS

JRJ Caught between Devil and the Deep Sea

December 1987

The Sri Lankan President, J.R. Jayewardene, who had heaved a sigh of relief in October end as the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) crushed the virile resistance of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in the Jaffna peninsula, now finds himself in political quagmire. Viewed either from the vantage point of the hardliners within his ruling United National Party (UNP) or the raving Opposition groups, the "supremo" is evidently caught between the devil and the deep sea.

On October 11, the minister for agriculture, Gamini Jayasuriya, a severe critic of the Indo-Sri Lankan accord, resigned from both the cabinet and membership of Parliament in protest against two constitution amendment Bills seeking the merger of the northern and eastern provinces and setting up of a provincial council for devolution of power in the local affairs. The immediate provocation for his exit being that his name was ot listed among the official speakers taking part in the three-day debate on the Bills. Sensing the mood of dissent in the ruling party, Prime Minister R. Premadasa, while replying to the debate, launched a scathing attack on India. Even though his stance did not come as a surprise to observers because he had been raising an accusing finger against India right from the days of its involvement as a mediator in the negotiating process to solve the island's ethnic problem. What came as a surprise was that he had orchestrated his arguments with those of the Opposition. While keeping himself firmly planted on the treasury side, he was expressing his determination to sabotage the accord in its implementation. While shedding crocodile tears for the beleagured Tamil militants, he spat fire on India. He said: "We know who made our children (referring to the Tigers) militants so bold. It is our neighbour who is responsible for the disobedience of our children." He mockingly persisted with his "our children" theory, saying that the 'children" who ran off to an "uncle" after complaining against "their father" were now saying, "the father was far better in treating than the uncle." He betrayed his lack of statesmanly introspection that it was the step-fatherly treatment of the Tamils, whom he referred to as "children', and reducing them to the status of second-class citizens which brought the nation to its present plight.

Premadasa accused the IPKF of committing "genocide", adding: "There is nobody who accuses India of genocide. Whatever mistakes big people make no one speaks about them." The Indian soldiers need not have sacrificed their lives in Jaffna had New Delhi not encouraged the Tamil militants, training them and arming them during the past four years. After raising a discordant note about the proposal for merging the northern and eastern provinces, he apologetically took the government stand that the proposed autonomy would in no way pose any threat to the unitary character of Sri Lanka. "The Bills were for those who accepted the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of the country," he asserted. Then he hinted at the government's intention of sidetracking the implementation aspects, saying that the President could not just go and amalgamate the northern and eastern provinces. "There are certain conditions. I will do everything possible to prevent the amalgamation, which is not particularly beneficial for the Muslims who are living there for generations."

By picking holes in the Bills and through making barbed references against India, Premadasa was obviously playing to the Opposition benches, particularly to the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) members. The Leader of the Opposition, and SLFP leader, Anura Bandaranaike, spoke in the same tone and vein, betraying an undercurrent of understanding between the two. Bandaranaike said despite the much-talked about accord, peace in the island remains a far cry. "We have, instead, seen carnage, violence and more and more massacres since the agreement was signed about three and a half months ago," he said, alleging that the IPKF had massacred Tamils who had nothing to do with the LTTE and, over 400,000 people in Jaffna were refugees. Charging the government with having "sold our country", he demanded: "Get India out of our soil, out of our country, if you want the people to remain free." Bandaranaike told the government: "If you had dealt with India on an intelligent, systematic basis, India would [illegible] have bullied us into submission. You tried to bully India and they bullied back, and you got frightened."

In his reply, Premadasa echoed the sentiments of the SLFP leader's. He said: "You should understand the plight in which the President was placed. Our army had carried out its duty for four years. When victory was at hand after the Vdamrachichi operations, our great friend India gave us a signal, and the operations had to be stopped." The Prime Minister stressed that there should be reciprocity on the foreign that no one either in Colombo or New Delhi is willing to sing paeans about the accord, about which Rajiv at the outset spoke in a vein of "never-in-the-human-history" superlatives. Today both Jayewardene and Rajiv are at pains explaining the circumstances that led to the signing of the accord and the noble intention of doing justice to the Tamils in the island. All that is history. The words of the two are for records. The close advisers of Rajiv and Jayewardene and their more-loyal-than-king supporters would even go to the extent of saying that the accord should be choreographed in golden letters. But, seen in the day-to-day implementation, the

accord has, indeed, got stained with blood. Since it was signed, the island has the southern part of the island. Now it has established networks in other parts. The transport and other utility services workers' unions have been so heavily infiltrated by JVP activists that they could disrupt normalcy at any moment; which, indeed, they have been doing in recent weeks. Colombo and other major cities like Kandy, Anurathapura and Badula were subjected to bomb explosions set off by them as Parliament was discussing the constitution amendment Bills. Scores of people were killed and hundreds maimed. The newspapers, mostly government-controlled, and the state-owned electronic media, invariably failed to pinpoint the culprits, or attributed the evil doings on the Tamil militants.

The desperate LTTE went on a killing spree by gunning down the innocent Singhalas and the Tamils Muslims in eastern province. As the IPKF, having hounded out and hunted down the LTTE in the Jaffna peninsula, now faces the regrouped Tigers in the eastern province. During the entire month, the daily briefings by the peace-keeping forces and the government spokesmen in Colombo gave accounts of so many killed, so many wounded and so many captured. However, the counts of the casualty alone did not speak of the magnitude of the tragedy of Sri Lanka. The trauma of the people of the island went far beyond the stark details of the bloodletting that has been going on. The psyche of the entire population, irrespective of ethnic identity, remained crippled. On the one side, there was the overwhelming fear as death lurked in every nook and corner. There was nothing nearing normalcy in any part of Sri Lanka. People openly talked about the reckless policies of the government that has pushed the nation to the brink, and the contingency which made the intervention of Indian troops for peace keeping operations inevitable. Correspondents visiting the islands wrote about "cyclonic anger" building up among the common people. They said Jayewardene, known for his genial wit and pleasant homilies, has become tense and withdrawn to the point of being jittery. The emerging dialogue between the UNP members and the Opposition

SLFP is the cause of Jayewardene's mounting worries, as the nation has reached the threshold of presidential and parliamentary elections. His decision to put off the provincial council elections, taking cover under the emergency situations, is indicative of his fear to commit the ruling party to face the electorate.

There are intelligence reports that the JVP and a faction of the Tamil guerillas have established contacts. The bomb blasts in the Singhala-dominated areas, and in the major cities, which are attributed to the JVP, is seen as a prelude to a possible nationwide insurgency. With the Sri Lankan army and police ranks being heavily infiltrated by the JVP men, the President is in a miserable plight. His own life is being guarded by Indian commandos. The UNP-SLFP axis could have emerged because of the fear of a civil war being on the scheme of things of the JVP.

All these pose a portent in handling the Sri Lankan imbroglio for India. Caution can at no point be thrown to the wind, as it happened while signing the accord. The Sri Lankan President, who is neck deep in a political mire, may want India to play a "political lifeguard" role for him. For whatever he might have made or marred—in his desparate attempt to find a way out of the ethnic crisis—he should be left alone to pay in for political terms. India's stand on Sri Lanka ought to be abundantly clear—that being to honour the island republic's integrity and sovereignty. On the part of Sri Lanka the commitment to devolve power to the northern and eastern provinces and ensuring the right of the Tamil people to run their civic affairs in the areas where they are in majority is inalienable, according to the accord, for which India has paid heavily. The Sri Lankan parliament has passed the necessary Bills. It now remains for Jayewardene and his UNP to muster public support to implement the provisions. As a house divided within itself, Sri Lanka is allowing a political drift that might lead to a nationwide insurgency. India would certainly like political stability in the island. But it is certainly not India's business in assisting any political party or personage there to achieve it.

W.S. Titus

LETTER

New Delhi's puppet

Correspondent Manik de Silva states that the Lanka Sama Samaja Party (LSSP) supports the Indo-Lanka peace accord of 29 July [**Terrorists in the south** REVIEW, 12 Nov.]. In fact, while welcoming moves to resolve the ethnic problem peacefully, the central committee of the LSSP has questioned the Indian involvement in Sri Lanka's domestic affairs. Far from supporting the accord, the committee has resolved that the accord will not solve the ethnic problem, and has put forward its own proposals. The truth is that the only party, apart from the United National Party, to support the accord is the Communist Party of Sri Lanka.

The mass of the people of Sri Lanka are opposed to the accord. The question at hand is not that of the ethnic dispute, but that of India's expansionism. One-third of Sri Lanka, including the strategic port of Trincomalee, is de facto Indian territory. The two Indian army divisions in Sri Lanka outnumber the Sri Lanka army, and more troops are on the way. The government of Sri Lanka has become New Delhi's puppet.

In this situation, where democratic opposition is stifled, the people will turn more and more to the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna, which is now establishing "liberated zones" all over the south. Unless democracy is restored, terrorism will triumph.

Rajagiraya, Sri Lanka **M. Zaidi**

EDITORIAL

Get the IPKF out of Sri Lanka

IT IS NOW ADMITTED THAT THE INDIAN government is not being truthful while publishing figures of the casualties suffered by the Indian Army in Sri Lanka. There is reasons to believe that at least 600 Indian soldiers have been killed till November end in Sri Lanka and over 1500 have been so seriously injured that many of them will have to live the life of cripples.

The Government of India had no business to get involved in the civil war in Sri Lanka. R. Gandhi who was embroiled in a domestic crisis because of his involvement in the Bofors kickback and other scandals needed a diversionary move to take the spotlight away from his predicament. The Americans not only wanted India to be involved in a military adventure in a foreign country, but also wanted to bail out their protegy Jayewardene from a politically and militarily hopeless situation, besides wanting to prevent the emergence of Sirimao Bandarnaike.

And the Indian troops are now dying to fulfil the ambition of R. Gandhi to make India a "regional super power". Gandhi's ambition which is pandered to by the Americans and the Russians for their own vicarious reasons is costing the nation very dearly both in terms of men and money. By a modest estimate, the war in Sri Lanka is draining the Indian exchequer of Rs. 5 crores a day. This is something we can ill-afford. Ultimately it is the poor people of our country who will have to underwrite with their empty stomachs the cost of Gandhi's follies and ambitions.

Since most national political parties are still not clear on how to deal with the situation created by India's involvement in Sri Lanka, it becomes the responsibility of the Hind Mazdoor Kisan Panchayat to take the initiative to organise the people to raise their united voice demanding the immediate withdrawal of the Indian Army from Sri Lanka. The HMKP had, at its national convention in Visakhapatnam, on November 15-16, made such a demand, and it should not waste any time in mobilising the people behind it. Meetings, demonstrations and other forms of protest actions must be organised at various levels in the entire country. A notice should be served on the government that if the troops are not withdrawn at once, then a more vigorous form of protest action would be initiated. Several regional political parties and mass organisations in Tamil Nadu which have been campaigning for India's withdrawal from Sri Lanka should be approached for support in the launching of a wider nation-wide movement.

the OtherSide □ December 1987

SLFP leader demands withdrawal of IPKF

NEWS

COLOMBO, Dec. 4.

The Opposition leader, Mr. Anura Bandaranaike of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party made a strong plea in the Sri Lanka Parliament yesterday for withdrawal of the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) from the island and said the relations between the two countries would improve and become more cordial as soon as this was done.

Speaking on the votes of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Bandaranaike said the principal task of the IPKF was to achieve the surrender of arms by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and other militant groups But the LTTE continued to kill and destroy.

'IPKF on the rampage': He alleged that the IPKf was going on the rampage, "whose scale is thousand times that of the Sri Lanka Army." "We don't want to become the "Vietnam" of India or the "Afghanistan" of Russia," he said. Criticising the Government's foreign policy, he said that his Sri Lanka Freedom Party did not follow a policy of "deliberate hostility" to India. "We were not stupid enough to do that. We, the SLFP, did not put our country in a position where we had to turn to India and say, "please help us solve our Tamil problem."

Forced to sign accord: Mr. Bandaranaike alleged that for its help, India had forced Sri Lanka to sign the accord, which had resulted, if not in the total loss of the island's sovereignty, at least in its abridgement. "What is the price we have to pay for the great price India is paying to station the IPKF in the north, another SLFP member asked.

Replying to the debate the Foreign Minister, Mr. A. C. S. Hameed, said that if the SLFP had participated in the All-Party Conference in 1984 and cooperated in the efforts to solve the ethnic problem, the country could have avoided a great deal of bloodshed.

Status of Trincomalee port: Referring to the charge that the Opposition was not consulted prior to signing of the accord, Mr. Hameed said such negotiations were not conducted publicly. He said Sri Lanka had assured India that Trincomalee and other ports would not be given to any country for military purposes. "We would allow naval ships to enter for refuelling or bunkering, but not, if they are carrying nuclear weapons," he said.

The Voice of America station had a "wide dimension", but Sri Lanka had taken the precautions against the VOA disturbing any other country, he added. — UNI

REPORT

'IPKF will stay on till mission is fulfilled'

From T. S. Subramanian

JAFFNA, Dec. 3.

The Indian Peace Keeping Force had gone to Sri Lanka "with a mission given to fulfil the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement" and "will go back only when the Agreement is implemented", Maj. Gen Harkirat Singh, General-Officer Commanding of the IPKF said here today "Time is of no consequence to us".

Gen. Harkirat Singh was talking to a party of reporters at the Palaly headquarters of the IPKF in the Jaffna peninsula. A team of reporters from Madras was earlier taken for a five-hour trip of Jaffna town and the peninsula.

"We are telling the (local citizens) that the Indian Army has come here with a mission given to fulfil the Agreement. The Indian Army will not go from here till the Tamils are satisfied and their aspirations are met," he said.

Referring to the Sri Lankan President, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene's statement that the IPKF would complete its operations against the Tamil militants "very soon," Gen Harkirat Singh said "We take orders from the Government of India."

And "as far as the Government of India is concerned, we will implement the accord. We will stay here. Time is of no consequence. We have to ensure that the Agreement signed by the Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, is implemented," he observed.

"It is time for the people to look ahead for a peaceful era. You cannot keep harping (on the past)," Maj. Gen. Harkirat Singh said. The people were fed up with war and they wanted peace. "The IPKF will not go away from here This is not a people's wa . This is a war guided for a few individuals' gains," he added.

Answering a question on the reaction of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam to the 48-hour ceasefire declared by the Government of India, he said, "Whatever the reaction to the 48-hour ceasefire, we have not given up. We will continue to maintain pressure and the intensity will increase every day. We will look for contacts with the militants and wherever we contact, they will be destroyed. We will not give them a bouquet of flowers. They are the ones who started the war. They are the ones who fired first. The Overall (Force) Commander had spoken to them on October 8 but they did not listen."

In the last 72 hours, the IPKF had nabbed more than 100 "hardcore" LTTE men. "They are coming and willingly surrendering to us They are taking us to the hideouts. The Navatkuli catch was on a tipoff. They (IPKF) searched and searched, and they found it. It was a tipoff given by the LTTE men. Some of them want to surrender to us. They are not being allowed to surrender."

Information from reliable sources had indicated that the LTTE had totally run out of explosives. "The amount of explosives we have destroyed is enormous. We don't want to carry it. We don't want to exaggerate, it is a reality," Maj. Gen. Harkirat Singh said.

R.K. Lakshman, The Times of India.

IPKF under command of Jayewardene: Sri Lanka

COLOMBO, Dec. 10.

Sri Lanka today said the Indian Peace Keeping Force was under the command of President, Mr. Jayewardene, the Commander-in-Chief, and Indian soldiers are in the country at the invitation of the Island Government.

The activities of the IPKF in Sri Lanka "are governed by the executive powers of the President, who is the Commander-in-Chief", the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, Mr. Vincent Perera, told Parliament.

The national agency, Lankanuvath said Mr. Perera was making a statement in the House on behalf of the Prime Minister in response to a question on Tuesday by the Opposition Leader Mr. Anura Bandaranaike.

Mr. Bandarnaike had referred to a statement reportedly made by the G.O.C. of the IPKF in Jaffna, Maj. Gen. Harkirat Singh, to a group of correspondents that Indian "troops take order from the Government of India."

Mr. Perera said enquiries with the Government of India revealed that portions of Gen. Harkirat Singh's statement had been carried out of context in local newspapers.

Mr. Perera said, according to the Indian Government, what was published, did not do justice to the opinions expressed by the Indian Commander.

"The IPKF will leave Sri Lanka when asked to do so by the President", he added.

He said the fact "has been stressed in several statements made by the Indian Prime Minister", and there "is no need to pay undue attention to the statement by the Major General which does not constitute an official statement."

படைகளின் பழிவாங்கல் ஷெல் அடியில் பொதுமக்கள் 32 பேர் உயிரிழந்தனர்

32 people killed in IPKF shelling

1987 டிசம்பர் 4

இச் சம்பவம் வாழைச்சேனைக்கும், ஓட்டமாவடிக்கும் இடையில் இருக்கும் மைலங்கரச்சி என்ற இடத்தில் கடந்த புதன்கிழமை மாலை நடந்தது.

இச்சம்பவம் குறித்து மேலும் தெரிய வருவதாவது-

சம்பவ தினம் பிற்பகல் 2 மணியளவில் இந்தியப் படையினர் 12 வாகனங்களில் பிரயாணம் செய்து கொண்டிருந்தனர்.

மைலங்கரச்சி என்ற இடத்தில் பாடசாலை ஒன்று இருக்கிறது. அந்த இடத்திற்கு அருகில் இந்தியப் படையினரின் வாகனங்கள் வந்த போது புலிகள் தாக்குதல் நடாத்த ஆரம்பித்தனர்.

முதலில் கைக் குண்டுகளால் தாக்கினர். பின்னர் இயந்திரத் துப்பாக்கிகள், கனரக ஆயுதங்கள் ஆகியவற்றின் மூலம் அதிரடித் தாக்குதல்களை மேற் கொண்டனர். இத் தாக்குதலில் இந்திய தரப்பில் ஒன்பது பேர் கொல்லப் பட்டனர்.

இந்த மோதல் பல மணித்தியாலங்கள் நீடித்தது. இம் மோதலை முறியடிக்க மேலதிகமாக இந்திய துருப்புகள் அந்த இடத்திற்கு விரைந்தன.

இதனை அடுத்து ஷெல் தாக்குதல்களை இந்தியப் படையினர் மேற்கொண்டனர். துப்பாக்கிப் பிரயோகமும் இடை விடாது மேற் கொள்ளப்பட்டது.

இந்தியப் படையினர் மேற் கொண்ட தாக்குதல்களினால் பொது மக்களில் 32க்கு மேற்பட்டோர் கொல்லப்பட்டனர். 200 க்கும் அதிகமானோர் படுகாயமடைந்தனர்.

கொல்லப்பட்டவர்களில் 19 பேர் முஸ்லிம்கள் என தெரிய வருகிறது

வாழைச்சேனை வீரகேசரி நிருபர் யூ. எல். இஸ்மாயிலும் கொல்லப்பட்டவர்களில் ஒருவர் ஆவர்.

காயமடைந்தவர்கள் மட்டக்களப்பு, வாழைச்சேனை ஆஸ்பத்திரிகளில் சேர்க்கப்பட்டுள்ளனர்.

INDIAN DOCTOR CONFIRMS VIOLENCE AGAINST CIVILIANS

INTERVIEW

Dr. M.S. Khan calls the Peace Force - Peace Killing Fore in Sri Lanka - KJELL GJERSETH - 4th December, 1987.

I don't understand what the Indian Government's motives are. What they call the Indian Peace Keeping Force, IPKF is something quite different, namely Indian Peace Killing Force. This force has shown two terrible capabilities; ability to destroy and the ability to kill civilians. The Indian doctor M.S.Khan says this to the "Afterbladet" in Jaffna.

Dr. Khan is working for the Indian Red Cross and came to Sri Lanka as a volunteer. He as in Jaffna during the bloody weeks after the offensive against the LTTE/the Tamil Tigers began on 10th October, 1987.

Dr. Khan says that he is appalled at the conditions in Jaffna, both health and sanitary. Hundred of wounded people do not receive satisfactory medical treatment. He confirms the allegations by both Tamils and Sinhalese in the North and South of Sri Lanka that "The IPKF has killed a large number of civilians." "I cannot say how many. However I am convinced that people were right when they claimed that only one of ten killed by the Indians, was a guerilla fighter", says Dr. Khan.

A regular bus-service from Jaffna to Colombo was started from the beginning of last week. The striking feature was that the buses were over-crowded by passengers when they left Jaffna. Only about 20% of the city's population are left from the total number of people resident before the Indian troops began their offensive. This means that over 250,000 people have fled from Jaffna. When Afterblad's correspondent noticed last week-end was that people from the districts were moving into the town!

The Tigers have spread themselves out and attack Indian positions thorughout the Jaffna Peninsula. They lay land mines not only on the Main roads but also on other local road nets. The Tigers are experts on mines. The paradox is that they learnt it in India.

Many Indian soldiers were killed by mines, often 10-15 soldiers in one explosion. The Tiger's network of mines and their success give rise to the scepticism about the number of Indian fatalities, admitted by the IPKF. Jaffna citizens claim that hundreds of Indian soldiers were killed in street battles. The Tigres place mines every where after withdrawing from their position.

Officially 265 Indians are dead but the real number could be three times that. An earlier announcement by sources in the Peace Fore admitted to Afterblad that over 900 were killed.

During the journey from Colombo to Trincomalee and further north towards Jaffna, we passed tens of refugee camps. Both Tamil and Sinhalese refugees have surprisingly undergone the same experiences at the hands of the Indians and both groups hate the Indian soldiers. They also share a common fate – homelessness. The refugees receive only just enough food supplies to keep starvation out and nothing more. The 400,00 refugees in Sri Lanka receive only minimum help. This applies to the Sinhalese refugees from the Eastern areas, also. An estimated 60,000 to 80,000 of the refugees are Sinhalese.

'LTTE has not stood by commitment'

MADRAS, Dec. 22.

The Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, today declared that the Government of India would not allow whatever had been gained for the Tamils in Sri Lanka to be lost.

"We will ensure the rights for the Tamils of Sri Lanka and we will not allow anyone, not any intransigent group or anybody else to take those rights from being granted to the Tamils now", he said.

Mr. Rajiv Gandhi was addressing the Congress (I) workers on the Teynampet grounds. The TNCC (I) president, Mr. M. Palaniyandi and the State Youth Congress president, Mr. A. Jayamohan made a token presentation to him of the over 50 lakh signatures the party volunteers had collected from all over Tamil Nadu in support of the India-Sri Lanka agreement and the IPKF actions in Jaffna.

Towards the end of his 30-minute speech, the Prime Minister referred to the Sri Lankan Tamils issue. He said the agreement went well beyond anything that the Tamils had ever put forward. "It is an agreement which for the first time looked at almost every single problem of the Tamils, found answers to those problems and a guarantee for those answers".

'Best agreement'

Mr. Rajiv Gandhi reiterated the point that before he went to Sri Lanka and signed the agreement, he had talks with every militant group of Tamils from Sri Lanka; he also had talks with the other major groups of the Tamils.

"All of them agreed that it was the best agreement they could have ever imagined and that they would work along with the agreement".

Many of them, he said, raised new points, but "they were not looking back, they were looking forward". They were asking as to what would happen to development, to those who were unemployed or displaced and how would they go back. And, "we found solutions to every single point that was raised".

The Prime Minister asserted that even the LTTE agreed to go along with everything that India had done. It raised three or four new points; these were included and the LTTE got "exactly what it wanted in those points". But, the LTTE had not stood by any of its commitment or promise it had given.

"Today, we find that the LTTE, a small group of Tamils without a base, without a following, is holding all the Tamils in Sri Lanka to ransom, holding the agreement which will benefit all the Tamils of Sri Lanka from not being implemented because of personal ambitions and intransigence", Mr. Rajiv Gandhi said.

The Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, talks to an injured jawan of the Indian Peace Keeping Force at the Military Hospital in St. Thomas Mount, Madras yesterday.

THE HINDU, December 23, 1987

THE ILLUSTRATED WEEKLY OF INDIA

COMMENT

BODY-COUNT

The battle in Jaffna, says O V Vijayan in this unusual point of view, is yet another manifestation of Aryan conquest.

DECEMBER 13, 1987

By the time this gets into print, the Tamil Tigers of Jaffna will have been vanquished, in what history will record as an inglorious and unheroic war of one armoured division against a mere two-and-a-half thousand natives fighting for selfhood. Perhaps theirs was a hysterical nationalism etched in sordid tints, but then all nationalism, denied peaceful expression, turns hysteric; hysteria is what ties together sorrow and passion and denied justice into a bloody whole.

Perhaps, again, history, *our* history, may never record the tragedy and the shame of our army being reduced to the status of mercenaries in somebody else's genocidal war, a war of racial swamping. Because *our* history is the history of the legitimisation and glorification of the Aryan conquest, while the history of the Dravidian is asleep in the quiescent Deccan plateau and the ancient and unrisen Western Ghats. Two thousand five hundred Tamils, misdirected or otherwise, now scatter before 30,000 armoured invaders, to become a residue of consciousness, and spill over into the sullenness of India's own Tamil peninsula.

I cannot help dissociating myself from the current insensitivity that the Indian North has acquired in its understanding of the confrontation. They deal with the strife in terms of complacent references. I have heard some of the most incredible opinions; a retired major of the Indian army who had taken part in the Bangladesh war, commenting on a parallel crisis, once told me that the Bengalis were incapable of looking after their own affairs. The conversation, following the inexorable logic of crudity, ended in an assertion of the superiority of Punjabi dairy farming.

"You know," said the major, "our buffaloes yield more milk."

"I don't doubt it," I assented with the Southerner's deference to the central suzerain.

"You feed your buffaloes grass and hay. We feed ours pulses."

I had no doubt of that either; I was aware, though, that in farms in America and Canada and Australia as well, the fat cows and buffaloes were fed pulses, and that this excess protein was the stuff that imperialism was made of. Not the imperialism against the backdrop of which Lenin interpreted Marxism, but an imperialism of colour, of shades of pigment, and an arrogated superior sexuality.

It is time we recognised that the Tamil, unlike the Maya or the Aztec, has survived into our fragile present carrying with him unspoilt, the resplendent memories of his myth. The cyanide capsule worn round his neck is his talisman of immortality, of his conquest of the fear of death. Such conquest ensures his triumph over the irrelevances of current history, over the transience of petty statehood.

The inconvenience experienced by Punjabi settlers in Britain, people gone to make hedonistic demands on the British welfare state, outraged the North's sense of mercenary nationalism. The Jaffna Tamils are locked in an infinitely more legitimate battle, and yet our North looks on it as an insurgency which 'imperial' India is destined to quell. The Aryan psyche is surfacing from beneath the tawdry frippery of protocol, and taking sides most unjustly in a battle of the races.

As men of the Indian Peace Keeping Force fall in battle, the heartland critic of Rajiv Gandhi indulges in a body-count, and complains bitterly that his kin are being killed by Jaffna's Dravidians. Incidentally, it is curious that he never recalls that in the policing patterns of British India men of lighter skin had always been used to suppress those with darker skins and vice versa, the heartlanders against the peripherals and vice versa.

That was a neat game, but a game of empire. Free India chose to go on with the game while the going was good, and ignore the need to humanise the differences of its peoples. Forty years were spent playing the game; it caused no alarm, as yet it involved no large segments of the population. The game escalated, and the body-count has begun. It augurs well for no one, and still the men in power choose to ignore the fearsome signals of the body-count.

I am no racist, and still believe that it is possible to conceive of the complementarity of racial variance, of the separate perfections in which God made his peoples. I am inspired by this human variety in which there is fulfilment for everyone. If black is beautiful in the United States, it is so in Africa, and so too in the memory-laden Tamil country.

Marauding imperialists, traders and compradores, and pundits of the bourgeoisie, have divided the organic territories of the races and given to this deceit the mask of patriotism. They have enslaved the black people, whether in Africa or in Asia, deprived them of their native nutrients, enfeebled their physiognomies, and undermined their confidence in their beauty and their sexuality.

This is what battle in Jaffna is about; it is a battle soon to be fought on the plains of Aryavarta from where the Indus Valley civilisation was put to flight by the Aryan vandals.

AFFIDAVIT

PATHMANATHAN PARAMESWARY (38) Kalikovil, Mulai, Chulipuram.

The deceased Subramaniam Pathmanathan, aged 37 years was my husband.

He was employed as Carpenter.

On 11.12.87 my husband on hearing the death of his sister who died in a shell blast at Mallakam left home for Mallakam to bring her body to Mulai.

That evening I came to know that my husband was killed when a shell fell and exploded while he was at his sister's house.

Both their bodies were brought to our home at Mulai on the same day.

My husband's body along with his sister's body was cremated at Pithanai Cemetery, Mulai.

I have a six year old daughter.

My child and I have been deprived of the maintenance and support we received from my husband.

THANGESWARY SIVASUNTHARAM, (36) Vigneswara Veethy, Chankani East, Chankani

The deceased Seenior Sivasuntharam aged 40 years was my husband.

He was a Farmer.

On 13.12.87 the army was surrounding our area with a shell barrage.

We left our house and went to the Vigneswara Vidyasala with the intention of taking refuge there.

As we approached the school gate a shell struck the school compund wall and exploded.

My husband was struck by shrapnels and died instantaneously.

His body was cremated at Vilaveli cemetery Chankani on 14.12.87.

My children and I have been deprived of the maintenance and support we received from my husband.

KANTHASAMY SINNAPILLAI (52) C/o. C. Kandasamy, Kalati Lane Kondavil, West, Kondavil.

The deceased Kanthasamy Thillaikumaran, aged 18 years was my son.

He was a Grade. 9 student at Periyapulam Maha Vidyalaya.

On 14.12.87 we were coming from Anikottai towards Thavadi.

At about 11 a.m. shell fell beside my son and exploded injuring him seriously.

I took him to my relative's house at Thavadi.

We could not take him to the hospital due to the tension prevailed at that time.

He died on 17.12.87.

His body was cremated at Thavadi cemetery on 18.12.87.

I have two surviving children.

ARUMAINAYAGAM SIVAPACKIAM (44) widow, Chankanai.

The deceased Muthan Kanapathy, aged 71 years was my father.

The deceased age was wrongly given in the death certificate as 47 instead of his true age 71.

He was a vegetable vendor who supported and maintained our family.

On 15.12.87 our area was pounded by the army with mortar shells.

At about 2.00 P.M. as the shells started to explode in our neighbourhood we fled from our house.

My father opted to stay at home as he could not run fast enough to escape the wrath of the shell fire.

Before I could proceed further I heared an explosion in the direction of our house and ventured back to see.

There I found my father's dead body lying in a pool of blood.

After my husband's death ten years ago it was my late father who supported and maintained our family through his vocation as a vegetable vendor.

I have two children.

KANTHIAH SORNAMMAH (68) 15, K.K.S. Road, Thavadi, Kokuvil.

The deceased person Kasipillai Thangarajah, aged 70 years, a bachelor was my elder brother.

My brother was living with my daughter, Shanmugasundaram Pushpavathy at her residence at Thavadi until he met his death.

During the October, 1987 military offensive, I was residing at Kilinochchi.

I came to Jaffna on 15.12.87 on hearing that my brother was seriously injured, when the Kokuvil Hindu College refugee camp in which he was a refugee was cannon charged by the IPKF on 26.10.87.

The news reached me very late due to the tension prevailed during that period.

I went and saw my brother who was admitted at the Jaffna General Hospital.

On 17.12.87 my brother expired.

The cremation took place at Navali on 18.12.87.

SANGARAPILLAI PARAMESWARY (42) Nelliyan, Chempain Pattu

I am the bereaved wife of Karthigesu Sangarapillai (48) who died on 15.12.87.

He was employed as a post peon who was forced to leave his job due to mental illeness in 1985.

During 1987 he underwent medical treatment at Point Pedro Base Hospital.

In December 1987 my husband went to Puloly and stasyed in a relative's house as it is situated near the Point Pedro Base Hospital where he was being treated for the mental illness as an out-patient.

On 16.12.87 I was informed that my husband was shot and killed by the IPKF at Puloly South when he was went out of the house where he stayed.

On hearing the news I went there and cremated the body at Anaivilunthan cemetery.

RASALINGAM CELESTINE FELICIA (28) Ward 10, Nedunthievu.

The deceased person Kanthiah Rasalingam, (34) was my husband.

My husband was a fisherman.

On 15.12.87 at about 5.00 p.m. my husband left in a boat for fishing.

After I heard several cannon shots from the sea.

My husband did not return afterwards.

I learned that he was shot and killed by the navy while he was in the sea.

His body was not recovered.

I have two daughters.

We are undergoing untold hardships.

PONRAJAH AMMANKILI (38) c/o K. Parimalam, Point Pedro Road, Palaly North, Myliddy.

I am the wife of Selliah Ponrajah (47) who died on 16.12.87.

He was a Fisherman.

On 16.12.87 at about 10.00 P.M. my husband left for fishing in a boat with another person.

On the following day at about 7.00 A.M. the person who accompanied my husband came and informed me that my husband was shot and killed by uniformed men while they were engaged in fishing.

His body was brought home and cremated at Palaly cemetery.

I have four daughters and a son

After the death of my husband who was our sole bread-winner we do not have any income.

MRS. SAROJA SINNETHAMBY, (37) Navatkadu, Varani.

My late husband Sinnethamby while returning home at about 9.00 P.M. in the night on 16.12.87 after attending a ceremony in a relative's house closeby, was fired at by the IPKF patrolling the road.

He received gun shot injuries on the upper right arm and chest below his left-arm pit, the bullet making its exit from the right side.

I walked a few yards and then entered a house where he lay, as he could not walk any further.

He was only taken for medical attention on the following morning to the Manthigai hospital as Indian Forces wouldn't permit the transport of the patient. **Two persons who went to the Indian army camp at Varani to obtain permission for the despatch of the injured to hospital were not only refused permission but were detained at the camp.**

He was warded at Manthigai Govt. Hospital at about 8 A.M. on 17.12.87.

He succumbed to his injuries at the hospital at about 5 A.M. in the morning on 18.12.87.

My husband was the Manager of the M.P.C.S. Stores at Kodikamam and was receipt of a monthly salary of Rs. 1000/-.

Since the death of my husband I and my five depandent children, three of whom are school-going are left with no support or maintenance for our living.

I have no financial resources to fall back upon and may be granted relief and assistance to bring up my children who are young and school going.

MATHAN SELLATHURAI (53) Urelu East, Urelu.

The deceased Sellathurai Sinnammah aged 45 years was my wife

On 17.12.87 at about 12.00 noon we heard gun shots and explosions in our neighbourhood.

Although I remained at home. My wife fled in fear.

Later I went to the nearby Muthumaramman Temple for safety.

At 5.30 p.m I was informed that my wife was shot and killed by the army.

I went to the scene of incident and found her body which bore a single gaping wound caused by a bullet on her back.

Her cremation took place on a nearby field on 18.12.87

MARKANDU KULAKANDU (63) "Ambikaivaram", Myliddy.

The deceased person Markandu Vijayananthan, aged 22 years was my son.

He was a Fisherman.

On 19.12.87 at about 3.00 p.m. my son left for fishing in a boat.

As he did not return home I became highly worried.

Later I was informed that he was shot and killed by the Navy while he was engaged in fishing.

His body was cremated at the Myliddy Cemetery.

I have a daughter Raguneswary (24).

My husband died two months after my son's death due to shock.

I do not have any income.

SENATHIRAJAH NAGAMMAH (72) widow, Kovilady, Chulipuram.

The deceased person Senathirajah Thiagarajah aged 51 years was my son (Bachelor).

He was a Businessman.

On 19.12.1987 at about 6.00 a.m. my son left home saying that he is going to Pandaterrippu market to purchase food provisions.

At about 7.0a a.m. I was informed that my son was killed in a shell blast while he was on his way to Pandaterrippu market.

On hearing the news my nephew Apputhurai Subramaniam rushed to the scene of incident and brought my son's body to our house in a bullock cart.

The cremation took place on 18.12.87 at Thiruvadinilayam Hindu Cemetery.

My late son was my only child and after his death I do not have any income or support.

MURUGESAPILLAI RASALINGAM (62) Iyahar Kovil Veethy, Sandilipay.

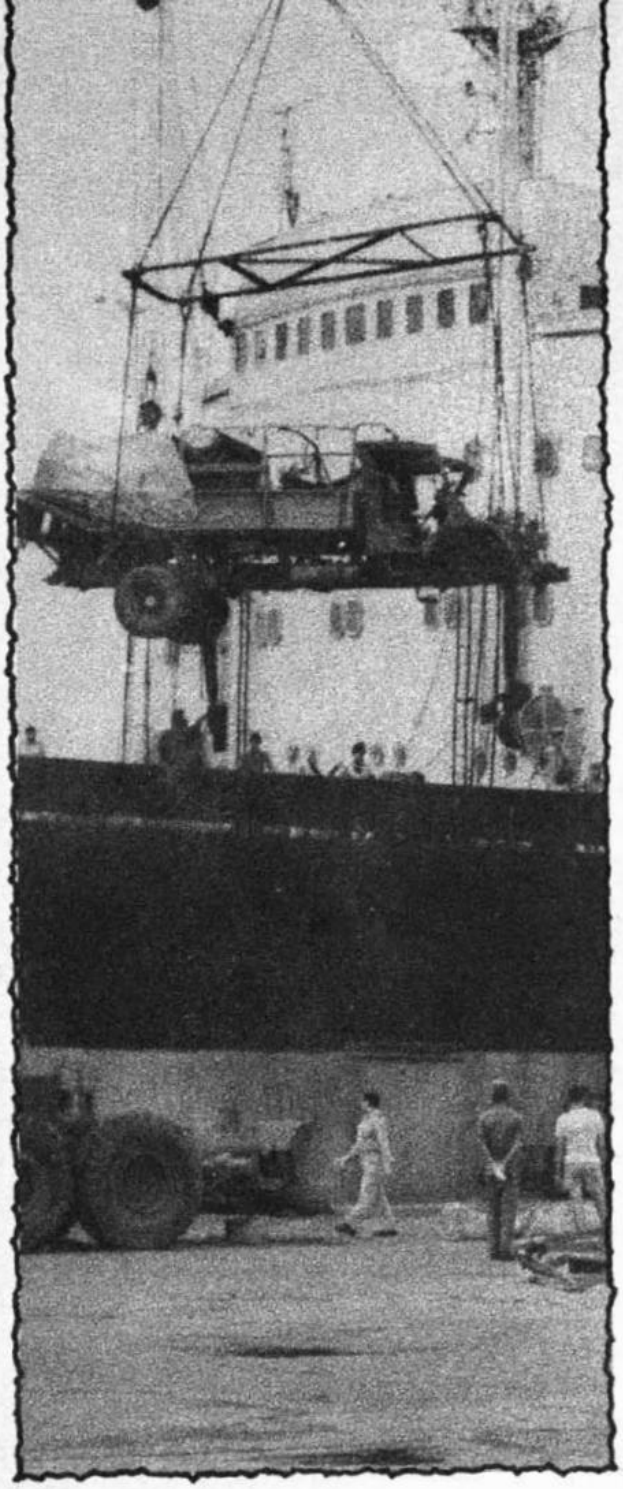
The deceased Rasalingam Sritharan, aged 19 years was my son.

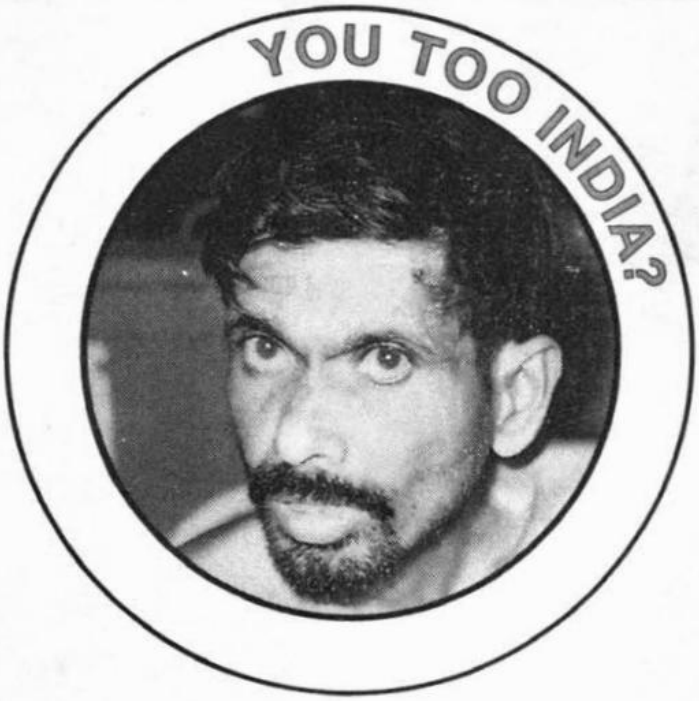
He was engaged in selling cinnamon at the time of his death.

On 20.12.87 around 10.30 A.M. when my deceased son R. Sritharan was returning home from the Co-operative stores after purchasing provision was shot dead by IPKF personnel who were lying in ambush near Sandilipay junction.

The dead body of my son was cremated at Vilaveli cemetery the same day at 4.30 P.M.

He sustained severe bullet injuries on both his thighs.




YOU TOO INDIA?

நடுத்தெருவில் கட்டெரித்து
நாய்கள் நிணம் புசிக்கச்
செம்மணியில் வீசுதற்கா
திருமலையில் தொட்டிலிட்டு
உன்னை சுமைகள்
பெற்றெடுத்தாள்?

காலனது காலடிகள்
காற்றதிரப் பதிவதற்கா
காலைகள் நீரெடுத்துக்
கோலமிட்டாள் மணற்பரப்பில்?

நெற்கதிரே,
நீல்விசும்பே,
நெஞ்ச இரங்காச் சூரியனே,
புல்லின் இதழ் நுனியில்
பூத்திருக்கும் பனித்துளியே

நீங்கள் அறிவீர்களா
எம் நெஞ்சுறையும் சோகத்தை?
எம் செந்நீரின் சரித்திரங்கள்
திசை எங்கும் சேதி சொல்ல
காற்றில் கலந்துவிட்ட
சாம்பல் துகள்களிலே
பயணம் தொடர்ந்த கதை
யார்தான் அறியவில்லை.....?

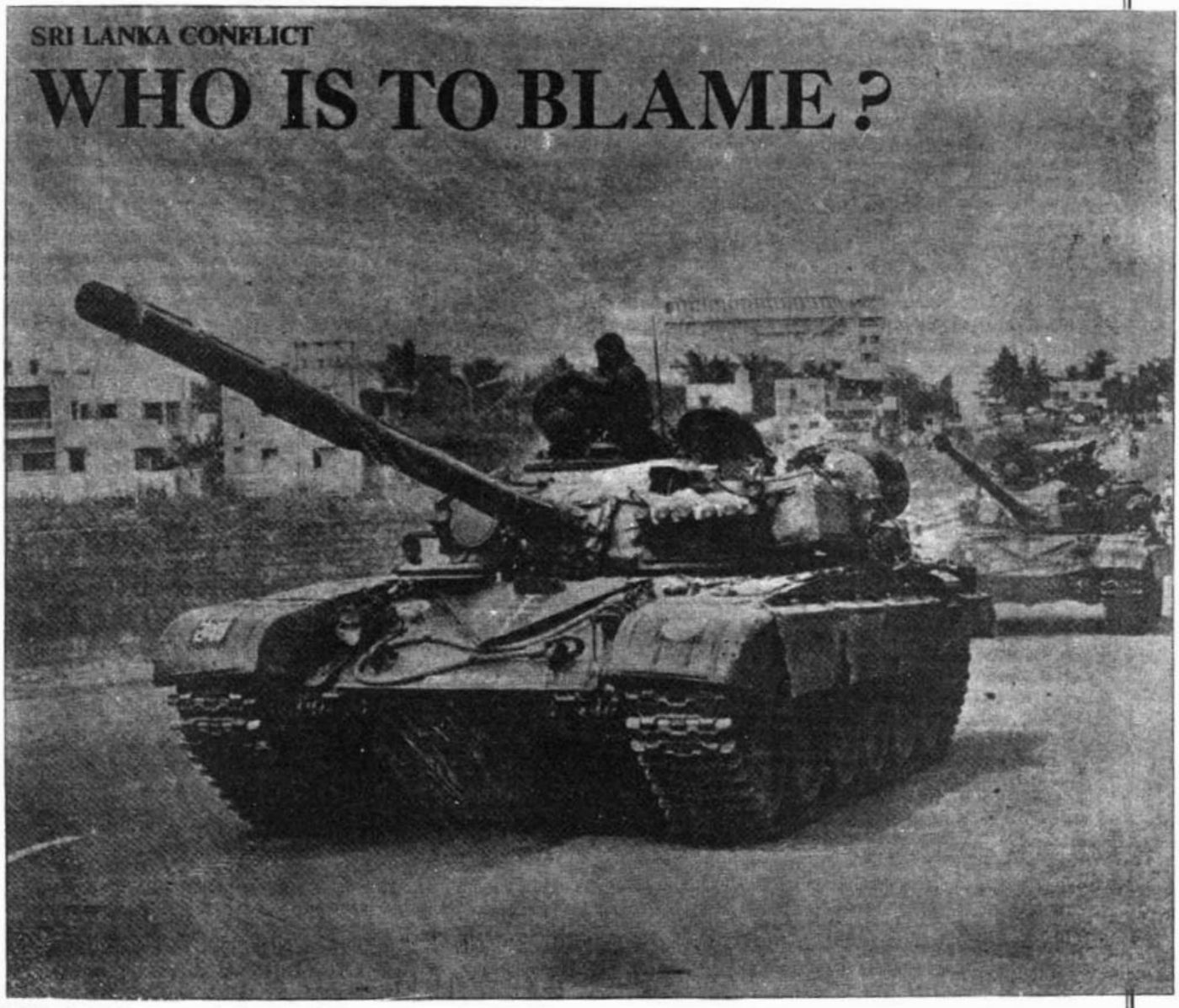
புழுதி பறந்த வீதிகள் எங்கும்
தூறி தோய்ந்து புலையின் சுவடுகள்

இன்னும் காற்றிலேறிய அந்தப்
படபடப்பும் பதகளிப்பும் அடங்கவேயில்லை.

எழும்பிய அவலக்குரல்களின் எதிரொலி
காற்றிலேறிக் கலந்தெங்கும்
ஏன்? ஏன்? இக்கொடுமை என்றறைகிறதே!

SRI LANKA CONFLICT

WHO IS TO BLAME?



T-72 tanks on the move towards the airport in Madras for being air-lifted to Sri Lanka

COMMENT

"In an intra-state conflict, it is worth repeating that force and counterforce, violence and counter-violence, do tend to exacerbate and prolong conflicts rather than to reduce them, and that military action in support of law enforcement, even of a purely policing nature, stiffens rather than overcomes resistance It certainly does not remove the structural causes, the roots of the conflict, which remain and are nurtured for a later day when history will repeat itself."

— JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

THE above remark of independent India's first prime minister was made in the context of the involvement of the United Nations in the Korean war (1950-53), caused by North Korea' attack on the South. India did not participate in the UN peace-keeping operations then, as Nehru thought—"it is extraordinary that we should seek to help our friends in ways which kill or destroy them....We should look to our own actions and learn again the ancient lesson that wrongdoing cannot be countered by further wrongdoing." But Nehru's wisdom has been ignored by his grandson. In fact, by signing the Indo-Sri Lankan agreement on July 29, Rajiv Gandhi created history whereby, for the first time in diplomatic

practice, one Third World country has invited the armed forces of another to diffuse its internal turmoil. And now, the Indian peace-keeping force (IPKF) is encountering in Sri Lanka the island's minority Tamil extremists, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), who have been fighting to carve out a separate and independent Tamil state (Eelam).

When the agreement was signed, it was thought to be the only achievement of the Indian prime minister in 1987 that bore the stamp of statesmanship. Barring a few opposition leaders from the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and some anti-Establishment academicians, most people in the country hailed the accord as "timely" and "just" and felt that it would go a long way in establishing a durable peace in Sri Lanka. Even usual Gandhi-baiters like Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N.T. Rama Rao, Karnataka Chief Minister R.K. Hegde and Lok Dal(A) General Secretary Subramaniam Swamy congratulated Gandhi on his having persuaded the Jayawardene regime in Sri Lanka to see reason and yield to the long warranted but genuine demands of the Tamils in that country. It was also thought that Indian primacy in the South Asian region had been firmly established, for India extracted from Sri Lanka the "unimaginable" concession that the latter would never have any alliance or special relationship with any international power if New Delhi disapproved.

The euphoria, however, has not lasted long. The accord has fallen far short of expectations and its admirers have now turned critics. Says Lt-General J.S. Aurora, MP, who had successfully commanded the Indian operation in Bangladesh in 1971: "It is not that our decision to send forces to Sri Lanka was wrong. But, subsequently, the Indian government handled the situation miserably. As a result, the IPKF rather than the Sri Lankan army is facing the brunt of the Tamil, terrorists for whose cause the Indian forces have gone to Sri Lanka." There is much to what the General says. For, despite the Indian government's endeavour to suppress the exact number of casualties among the Indian soldiers—who for the first time, have been placed under the control of a foreign government on foreign soil—the figure, going by the reports of Western journalists visiting Jaffna, has already exceeded 1,000, though Indian newsmen put it at only 300.

According to reliable sources, more than two Indian divisions, comprising 30,000 troops, backed by tanks, personnel carriers, fieldguns and commandos, are engaged in Sri Lanka. The Indian Air Force is using its transport fleet not only within Sri Lanka but also between that country and India for giving support to the ground forces. Similarly, there are at least two Leader-class Indian frigates in the Palk Straits, besides other small naval boats. The estimated cost of the operations in Sri Lanka, says A.P. Venkateswaran, the former foreign secretary, is nearly Rs 3 crore a day, all of it coming from the Indian exchequer. "This additional expenditure to our already inflated defence budget will soon have very bad repercussions on our ailing economy, especially given the severe drought in the country," Venkateswaran warns. However, points out Gen Aurora, "when a country fights a war, money ceases to be a factor. More important are the country's stakes—and this is where I visualise a gloomy picture, for we are in a no-win situation in Sri Lanka."

Gen Aurora feels it will be very difficult to eliminate or silence the LTTE cadres, who are adept at guerilla warfare. "The main problem in such wars is the fact that you can never differentiate between the friends and the foes," he says. Indeed, the LTTE does have a strong base amongst the local populace. And recent events make it clear that the Tigers' dangerous antics in the Jaffna peninsula are aimed at regaining the emotional support of the Tamils and pressuring India into conceding to them a monopoly in the island's Tamil areas.

INDIA is now in a precarious position. If it gives in to the pressures of the LTTE and its leader, Prabhakaran, the entire accord with President Jayawardene will be jeopardised and Sri Lanka's Sinhalese majority alienated. However, if India continues its present tough stand against the LTTE, "our whole purpose of going to Sri Lanka will be defeated," says Aurora. "Let us not forget that India's future strategic interests in the island can only be served if the Tamils there remain friendly to us." All this raises the question, at least from New Delhi's point of view, whether anything could have been more damaging than stationing Indian troops in Sri Lanka. And here the critics challenge the very wisdom of India having signed the accord with Sri Lanka.

"It was an instant accord, devoid of any serious thinking and discussion behind it. In fact, the swiftness with which it was concluded seemed to be a Sai Baba miracle. No wonder the accord has now become a discord," remarks Justice Krishna Ayiar, the former judge of the Supreme Court who unsuccessfully contested the presidential election this year. As a result, he adds, "it takes more than transcendental meditation to understand what this so-called accord is all about." Says a highly pessimistic Venkateswaran: "It is a monstrous hope that the accord will work." Congress(S) leader K.P. Unnikrishnan goes a step further. "The accord was a non-starter even before the ink dried on the paper on which it was signed," he avers.

Such harsh comments may be highly exaggerated. But the fact remains that from the very beginning, the accord had a serious flaw: It was signed between the governments of India and Sri Lanka only, and left out the most important party to the whole dispute—the LTTE. "It should have been a trilateral agreement," says Urmila Phadnis of Delhi's Jawaharlal Nehru University India's best-known expert on Sri Lanka. "But knowing as well as realising the intricacies of international politics, I will not blame the Indian government for this," she adds, giving three reasons for her point of view.

First, she says, India increasingly realised that "the LTTE was becoming too big for its boots," in the sense that its leadership was demanding something which could never be accepted—because an independent Eelam off our southern coast would have hampered rather than promoted Indian strategic interests, "for, another small neighbour could be easily vulnerable to the great powers' pressure, as in the case of Bangladesh." Secondly, partition of Sri Lanka with New Delhi's connivance would have given India a bad image and affected its nonaligned status, particularly when "we have never had any serious adversary relations with this neighbour." In this context, the parallel with the Bangladesh situation in 1971, which many in this country cite, is not valid, for there is a fundamental difference between the two situations. In 1971, India did not play any mediatory role in Bangladesh, then a part of Pakistan. It clearly sided with the "Mukti Bahini," fought the Pakistani forces alongside it, and won.

Finally, according to Prof Phadnis, knowing Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.G. Ramachandran's close proximity to the LTTE cadres in general and Prabhakaran in particular, Rajiv Gandhi must have counted on MGR influencing the Tamil extremists in favour of the accord. That is why MGR was taken into compelete confidence by the prime minister at every step prior to the finalisation of the accord. This ensured the

BE that as it may, the LTTE did not completely reject the accord, despite having many reservations about it. Nearly two months passed before its stand toughened till, eventually, the extremists openly defied and attacked the IPKF. "For this unfortunate state of affairs, the Indian government is squarely responsible," asserts Venkateswaran. He cites three developments which made the LTTE back out of the accord. First, he says, the IPKF, which was supposed to play an impartial role, took clear sides in favour of the Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation and the People's Liberation of Tamil Eelam, the two main rivals of the LTTE. It is alleged that the IPKF was not seizing arms from them while insisting rigidly on surrender of arms by the LTTE. Even in the subsequent fratricide among these extremist organisations, the LTTE was said to have been roughly handled by the IPKF. "This was highly partisan," says Venkateswaran.

Secondly, in Batticoloa district of the eastern province, the Sri Lankan government, according to the LTTE, started Sinhalese "colonisation" so that, in the proposed referendum to determine whether both the eastern and northern provinces would merge —in accordance with the provisions of the accord—there would be a Sinhalese majority to outvote the local Tamils. Thus, the most important goal of the Tamils, the merger of the two provinces, would have been eluded. Naturally, the LTTE protested against this.

In the process, some Sinhalese were also killed. "The IPKF should have understood the circumstances. But it did not. Instead, it arrested LTTE members and thus got alienated from the organisation," points out the former foreign secretary. In fact, he reveals, the Sri Lankan government retreated from its earlier position that the Sinhalese-majority Ampari district would not be a part of the united province. "By this step, Jayawardene more or less ensured that there would be no merger, as with Ampari being a part (of the referendum), the Tamils would not get the required majority in the eastern province to carry through the merger demand. Venkateswaran finds it surprising how the Indian government remained silent on this important issue. "This naturally fuelled the LTTE anger," he says.

The flashpoint, according to Venkateswaran, was reached on October 3, when 17 LTTE personnel were detained by the Sri Lankan navy off point Pedro. The Sri Lankan government wanted them to be brought to Colombo for trial, ignoring the IPKF's protests. Strangely, New Delhi instructed the IPKF to allow the transfer, with the result that the 17 men swallowed cyanide capsules and 12 of them died. "This inexplicable folly on the part of the Indian government led to a surge of anger among the LTTE cadres which no Prabhakaran could control," says Venkateswaran. However, Justice Krishna Iyer thinks that the situation would not have gone out of control had the wording of the Indo-Sri Lankan accord been chosen carefully. According to him, at least on two areas, there should not have been any ambiguities whatsoever. Rajiv Gandhi should have obtained a categorical assurance from Jayawardene about the merger of the two provinces, and there should have been absolute clarity on the extent of the devolution of constitutional power—legislative, executive and judiciary—to the proposed united province.

True, the accord did mention certain provisions in this regard, but the wording was so vague that now, even moderate Tamil groups like the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) find the Bill on the devolution of power passed recently in the Sri Lankan parliament highly inadequate. There are at least three provisions in the Bill that do not come up to the expectations of TULF. The first is a clause which envisages that every provincial council will have a "board of ministers" whose strength will not exceed five members, including the chief minister. The second is a provision which leaves the question of land settlements with the central government rather than the provincial one. And the third—which is the most important from the point of view of the Tamils—is the article on the merger.

According to the Article 37 of the Bill, the Sri Lankan president may, "by a proclamation," bring about the merger of any two provinces, provided the people of these provinces approve of it within a year. But in the case of the northern and eastern provinces, it is stipulated that the president cannot exercise this power unless there is complete cessation of conflict—which, in other words, means complete disarmament of the Tamil extremists.

CREDIT must be given to the drafting skill of Jayawardene. For nowhere does the Bill contain anything that can be said to be against the provisions of the Indo-Sri Lankan accord. "India cannot accuse the president of blocking the path of the merger of the eastern and northern provinces—for Jayawardene can easily counter by asking Gandhi to disarm the LTTE so that he can issue the notification of the merger," says Prof Phadnis. And here lies the problem: How to bring about the disarmament?

All the Indian parties, including MGR's All-India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, have urged the government to order a ceasefire in Sri Lanka for at least 48 hours to give the LTTE time to surrender. Even a Congress(I) MP (who wishes not to be identified) says: "A ceasefire would demonstrate to the world that India dispenses justice tempered with mercy." Adds Venkateswaran: "Nothing is lost by enabling an adversary to save face. In fact, if provided an opportunity to return to the path of reason, it is quite likely that the LTTE would grasp the chance offered to it."

The Indian government, however, is not in favour of such a course of action unless some conditions are met by the LTTE. Asserts K. Natwar Singh, minister of state for external affairs: "There should be no difficulty about ordering a ceasefire if India receives a clear understanding that the LTTE is for the Indo-Sri Lankan agreement of July 29, and that its cadres will lay down their arms and join in implementing the agreement." This rigidity in the Indian stand, sources say, is because of the fact that the anti-LTTE Tamil groups are happy about the present state of affairs, and are even helping the IPKF in "cleaning up" the Jaffna peninsula.

Meanwhile, fresh apprehensions have cropped up regarding the sincerity of Jayawardene in bringing about an enduring peace in Sri Lanka. Alleges Venkateswaran: "Jayawardene invited the Indian force not to implement the accord but to save his life as well as his government, which was facing an imminent coup by the Sri Lankan army and some rightist elements." Both Venkateswaran and Gen Aurora apprehend that "once Jayawardene feels safe—which is a matter of, at best, three months—he will ask the Indian troops to withdraw. And if by that time the LTTE is disarmed, it will be much easier for his government to unleash again a reign of terror on the Tamils."

However, such a scenario, according to defence ministry sources, is too farfetched. Says a high official: "If one goes by the logic that Jayawardene is facing a rebellion, then it is all the more reason why he should want the IPKF to stay longer. Therefore, I do not see any possibility of an early homecoming for our boys. They will be there till their noble mission is accomplished." In fact, both the ministries of defence and external affairs consider Jayawardene to be quite sincere—particularly after his latest offer of a treaty of peace, friendship and cooperation with India.

Once such a treaty comes into force, both the nations will be committed to the present arrangement, which has taken into consideration the security interests of both the countries. And the continuance of the ethnic crisis in Sri Lanka is certainly not conducive to India's security. What is more important, the treaty will remain valid for a particular period, irrespective of which party is in power in either country. Besides, considering the mutual suspicion between the people of both the countries, a treaty seems to be a sound proposition. But then, so did the Indo-Sri Lankan accord when it was first announced.

—PRAKASH NANDA

PROBE INDIA/DECEMBER '87

Chandu, The Hindustan Times, 23.12.87

COMMNT

INDIA'S LORDLY AMATEURS

After Backing The Wrong Horse

SWAPAN DASGUPTA

DECEMBER 12

THE maverick Forward Bloc leader, Mr Bhakti Bhusan Mandal, may be forgiven his inability to comprehend the fuss being made over the fact that he unveiled a portrait of the LTTE leader, Mr V. Pirabhakaran, and suggested that India should negotiate with the Tigers. An impressionable man whose earlier gaffes on China are legendary, Mr Mandal was undoubtedly swayed by the revelation that Mr Pirabhakaran hero-worshipped the founder of the Forward Bloc, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, a fact which Mr Krishnakumar "Kittu"—now in charge of the LTTE's Indira Nagar office in Madras—highlighted when rejecting New Delhi's pathetic attempt to buy over the Tigers' rank and file.

But Mr Mandal may not be the only person to be genuinely puzzled as to how a self-confessed follower of Netaji and someone who was virtually a state guest of the Central Government and of Mr M. G. Ramachandran can now be regarded as a national enemy. Ordinary people—and not merely in Tamil Nadu—may also be forgiven for their total bewilderment as to what exactly is going on in Sri Lanka and why more than 300 Indian soldiers have died in a battle against those very people on whose behalf the Government roused chauvinistic passions for the last four years.

COMPLEX

Admittedly, the matter has become more complex since responsible Ministers such as Mr P. Chidambaram are claiming that the IPKF is doing a "humanitarian service" across the Palk Straits and when it is realized that a head of state who compared Mr Rajiv Gandhi to Hitler a few months ago is now going to be honoured as the chief guest during the Republic Day celebrations in New Delhi. And, as if this were not enough, the Defence Minister, Mr K. C. Pant, had the temerity to tell the All-India News Editors Conference that India has "no desire to hurt" the LTTE or the Tamil people whose interests are "dear to our heart".

In a sense, the Government's past sins of disinformation have finally caught up with them. On November 22, the spokesman of the External Affairs Ministry declared self-righteously that 'Mr Pirabhakaran's assertion that the LTTE laid down a majority of its arms is not only astonishing, but a blatant falsehood. The fact is that the LTTE only laid down a small proportion of its arms". If South Block had a system of cross-checking, it would have realized that it was, in effect, calling the Indian High Commissioner in Colombo a liar. For Mr Pirabhakaran was merely repeating what Mr J. N. Dixit had stated publicly in September to the effect that the IPKF had recovered 70 per cent of the weapons of the Tamil militants.

Not that the Government is in any way apologetic about its disinformation. The Press, which often claims to be the "real Opposition" or at least a corrective, has no reason to be proud of its own dismal record of backing the Tamil Nadu Government when it showered a largesse of four crores of rupees on the LTTE-EROS combine after the brutal Colombo and Trincomalee massacres (nearly 300 people killed) in April, and for informing those who advised greater circumspection that "True, the Sinhalese may be angry but we have elected Rajiv Gandhi to protect and preserve the interests of the Tamils and Indians". As for the Opposition parties who now call the present Lanka policy an unmitigated disaster, let it not be forgotten that is they who recommended greater "firmness" by New Delhi, including, direct intervention.

Actually, there is little point raking up such uncomfortable evidence of political ineptitude for the truth is that the country bears a collective responsibility for allowing its foreign policy to be determined by a motley collection of—to use one of Harold Wilson's phrases—lordly amateurs.

In his very revealing autobiography, Asok Mitra, the distinguished civil servant, admits that few Indians "properly appraised" the "cataclysmic developments in Europe" in the 1930s: "When the civil war broke out in Spain in July 1936, I was astonished how many of our leaders found themselves in a quandary with misplaced sympathies and were at a loss to perceive that it was the first stage rehearsal of an impending tragic drama". I cite Mr Mitra's account because blind prejudice may lead far too many people to dismiss Nirad C. Chaudhuri's disturbing account of the extent of closet Fascism in Bengal during World War II.

It was this lordly amateurism that prompted Netaji to suggest an ideological synthesis of Communism and Fascism and, later, attempt to ride piggyback on Hitler and Tojo to Independence. And, if the Indian Left imagines that its monopoly of the "correct line" is intact, it may be recalled that it took only a letter from Harry Pollit in 1941 for the slogan of "imper-

ialist war" to be transformed into a specious "people's war" with unfortunate consequences.

Actually, had it not been for Jawaharlal Nehru—one of the only leaders with a sense of history and an international perspective—it is likely that post-Independence foreign policy would have been variants of those pursued by neighbouring lordly amateurs like Sir John Kotelawala and Field Marshal Ayub Khan. But even then, Nehru was always the butt of ridicule, and Sardar Patel's quip, "Indonesia? Ah, Indonesia! Where is it now? Ask Jawaharlal" was fairly indicative of the general impatience with happenings foreign.

Even when the political leadership manages to muster up sufficient concern over happenings outside our borders, as on South Africa it ends up reaching highly simplistic conclusions. The manner in which Mr Rajiv Gandhi has reduced the complexities of a protracted war against apartheid to the catch phrase "mandatory economic sanctions" is bewildering.

The Sri Lankan Trotskyist leader, Dr Colvin De Silva, often recounts the occasions when he advised successive UNP and SLFP Governments to resolve the Tamil issue so long as Nehru ruled in New Delhi. "After him you may not be so lucky". It would seem that Dr De Silva miscued somewhere. For, while Jawaharlal Nehru was deeply aware of the ethnic strains in Ceylon, he also realized that its resolution lay within the island. In 1939, at the idyllic hill resort of Nuwara Eliya he advised Mr S. Thondaman that the "Indian" Tamils should not look to India to safeguard their interests, their future lay in their ability to organize themselves and struggle within the local society.

Unfortunately, the logic of this deliberate detachment was failed when Colombo wantonly deprived Indian" Tamils of their rights, whereupon Lal Bahadur Shastri agreed to their selective repatriation in 1964. The damage this singularly shortsighted acquiescence did to the future of ethnic amity in Sri Lanka is incalculable. Mrs Indira Gandhi added a new twist after the creation of Bangladesh. The notion of India as the dominant regional power is, in itself, a practical recognition of reality, but what is repugnant is its bam-handed manifestation and application. Both make a mockery of enlightened self-interest.

Arguably, there was some justification for Indian anxiety after the horrible butchery of Tamils in Colombo in the summer of 1983 and for putting pressure on President Jayewardene to concede a measure of regional autonomy to the Tamils in the Northern and Eastern provinces. But it violated all the accepted norms of international conduct when New Delhi deliberately encouraged the reckless Tamil militants to destabilize the Government in Colombo in order to secure a decisive say in the future of Trincomalee harbour. It is not that New Delhi and the others were unaware of Mr Prabhakaran's perverted ideology, but they supported it because of wider geopolitical imperatives. Equally deplorable were the double standards applied to sustain an untenable demand for the merger of the two "home land" provinces.

Perhaps Mr Gandhi really imagined that the LTTE was a pliant instrument of Indian foreign policy or else he was incapable of grasping the implications of Mr Pirabhakaran's deliberate sabotage of every Indian diplomatic initiative since the Thimphu talks of 1985. Either way, India's strategic interests were pursued on the basis of the improbable assumption that Tamils are the only community in Sri Lanka that matters to us and that the Sinhalese count for very little.

It is one of the most glaring instances of diplomatic ineptness that Mr Dixit met the Sri Lankan Prime Minister, Mr R. Premadasa, after a lapse of 16 months. Some of Mr Premdasa's views may be unpalatable, but the fact is that he does represent an important political strand which we can ignore at our own peril. And, we do not need Mr Premadasa to tell us that IPKF is an unwelcome guest in Sri Lanka.

DILEMMA

India's dilemma is that it is getting more and more entangled in the mess in Sri Lanka with little immediate hope of getting out. The much-publicised strategic imperatives appear to have blinded the political leadership to the increasing hostility of Tamils to an army of occupation and the fictitious accounts of a relieved Jaffna populace carry about as much conviction as Henry Cabot Lodge's description of Vietnamese peasants under American occupation being "laughing and happy people enjoying bananas".

The significance of Mr Krishankumar 'Kittu's" claim that 2,000 civilians died and 500 women were raped in the course of the IPKF operations is that it is widely believed in the Jaffna peninsula as is Mr Mahattiya's cheeky, "How can those people who were buying electrical goods and TV sets in Jaffna have the same courage as we have?"

Equally disturbing are suggestions that the Indian military command has overruled the Prime Minister on a number of occasions and let it be known that they are in Sri Lanka to stay. If true, this points to a very dangerous precedent although it is probably premature to read any meaning beyond that at present. In any case, a prolonged stay in Sri Lanka will only destroy a certain national consensus about the armed forces and make it an object of domestic partisan politics. On both counts, the developments are unhealthy.

However, some positive by-products of the Indo-Sri Lankan accord and India's military intervention are the belated realization that Eelam is inimical to both Indian and Sri Lankan interests and that there can be no realistic meeting ground between national interest and Tamil interests. This awareness is crucial if the IPKF is to take the first tentative steps towards disengagement and allow President Jayewardene to fight his proxy war directly, albeit with the usual friendly assistance.

But for that to happen the implicit intellectual dishonesty of our policy-makers has to be abandoned and the political leadership must be prepared to admit that befitting the heritage of lordly amateurs, we backed the wrong side for four years.

The Telegraph

COMMENT

Ashok Mitra

Whynot a regional initiative for Lanka?

16 DECEMBER

In the United Nations General Assembly, the delegate of India could not agree more with the representative of Cuba: there ought to be a regional solution to the problem of Nicaragua, let the neighbouring half-a-dozen countries or thereabouts put their heads together and something satisfactory is bound to emerge. Nice, sensible point of view, many would say, nicely, sensibly expressed. But, then, what is sauce for Central American goose should also be sauce for South Asian gander. If the Nicaraguan issue is proposed to be remitted to the neighbouring nations in Central America, why cannot a similar solution be sought for the mess in Sri Lanka?

There is intense uneasiness in the country over the manner the situation in Sri Lanka has been allowed to develop; a euphoria has been transformed, swiftly, into a trauma. It is however matched by a reluctance on the part of political parties to discuss the problem openly. This is partly because few want to admit in public that they had committed a mistake in initially supporting the Indo-Sri Lanka agreement. There are also those who regard it wrong to express their misgivings in explicit language lest this compromises our troops in Sri Lanka. They are, after all, our troops; it is a matter of concern that they have been made to suffer on account of the wrong calculations of their political masters; why add to their misery by saying things which could further complicate matters.

But silence, whether rooted in embarrassment or otherwise, will not make the Sri Lanka problem disappear. Facts, uncomfortable facts, will continue to stare us in the face. It is necessary for the sake of ensuring the nation's long run interests that these facts are listed *seriatim*.

(a) As of this moment, Indian troops in Sri Lanka exceed 35,000 in number, roughly two and a half times the size of the Sri Lankan army. President Jayewardene has thrown a hint a few days ago that he expects this number to go up.

(b) While the Indian troops are in the island ostensibly to enforce the provisions of the Indo-Sri Lanka accord, President Jayewardene has not ruled out the possibility of their being used should an insurgency take place in the southern parts of the island: he would for the present only say that the matter has to be discussed further with the Indian authorities.

(c) There is some confusion over the line of authority in regard to these expatriate divisions of the Indian Army. President Jayewardene claims that they are to follow his orders; Major General Harkirat Singh, the officer in overall command, has not the least doubt that he takes his orders from the Government of India.

(d) The Indo-Sri Lanka agreement was signed between the governments of the two countries, and the Government of India took it upon itself to persuade the Sri Lanka Tamils to fall in. Since Indian civil authorities failed to persuade the Tamils to see the virtues of the agreement, Indian troops were ordered to do the needful. Basically, the Indian Army's role has been perceived as terrorising the Tamils into submission.

(e) The Tamils, whether belonging to the LTTE or of other hues, have strong reasons for opposing the agreement, for it does not satisfy either of their two main demands. The unification of the northern and eastern provinces, which the Tamils have been clamouring for, is subject to ratification through a referendum proposed to be held next year. The interim joint administration for the two provinces, proposed in the agreement, is just that. And the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka has gone on record: as long as he is in government, he will see to it that the unification never takes place. Referendum or no referendum, it is open to question whether President Jayewardene's private commitment on the point can be taken at its face value. After all, despite Mr Premadasa's open declaration, he has not been removed from office by the President: the Prime Minister is much too powerful to be removed.

(f) The second principal issue of concern to the Tamils is the nature and extent of the proposed devolution of powers and responsibilities to the provinces The agreement is silent on the details of this most crucial issue, and the discussions between Indian and Sri Lankan officials, subsequent to the signing of the agreement, have been most unsatisfactory from the Tamil point of view. Even according to the most moderate among the various Tamil outfits—the Tamil United Liberation Front—the concessions offered till now by President Jayewardene falls woefully short of their minimum expectations. Launching a full-scale military expedition against the Tamils so as to force them to conform to the terms of the agreement was thus perilously close to the act of a bully. And to suggest at this stage that the LTTE does not represent the majority of the Sri Lanka Tamils is to contradict all that the Government of India has said and done for the past few years, including as recently as in the first week of October last.

(g) Not only that the Tamils do not like the agreement, it is hated, in nearly equal measure, by the Sinhalese too. The leading opposition formation in the island, the Sri Lanka Freedom Party, is dead against it. The far-out Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna is opposing it with cocktail bombs and incendiary raids. President Jayewardene's United National Party is itself split down the middle on the issue of supporting the agreement. True, Prime Minister Premadasa and his friends did not vote it down in Parliament. But that is because it is tactically important for them not to effect a formal division in the party at this juncture; they are simply biding their time. Only the Communist Party and the Trotskyite Sama Samaj Party have other views. Their point of view is understandable. As political parties which devoutly believe in Sinhalese-Tamil amity as providing the abiding basis for working class solidarity, they welcomed the agreement since they thought it would pave the way to peace. In view of later developments, they too must be having second and third thoughts.

(h) At the scale guerilla warfare is raging in the northern and eastern parts of the island, other things remaining the same, the Indian Army will have to dig its heels in Sri Lanka, maybe for years, and an additional yearly burden on the Indian exchequer to the extent of around Rs 2,000 crores would appear to be a rather modest estimate. This is not going to be the end of the story either. India will be called upon to help Sri Lanka's economic reconstruction too. Funds needed for the purpose

are currently placed at close to Rs 1,000 crores, but the estimate is likely to go up. With the island continuing to be unquiet, there is little prospect either of early resumption of normal production or of tourist income and exports picking up once more. Sri Lanka is condemned to remain a typical "breadbasket" case for years to come.

(i) For, despite doctored communique daily issued from New Delhi, it does not seem that such heavy involvement on India's part—military, financial and otherwise—is going to see the end of the LTTE defiance. The situation as currently developing is much worse than in Punjab. Arrests and killings only alienate those who effect the arrests or do the killings, and not friends and supporters of those who are killed or arrested. The fact that India's moral case in and around Jaffna is weak, if not non-existent, does not help.

(j) When the Indian Prime Minister signed the Indo-Sri Lanka agreement, he counted heavily on the support extended—or expected to be extended—to him by two gentlemen fairly advanced in years. The first of these individuals, President Jayewardene, is eighty two, and is ruling by emergency decrees. Given the reverberations of discontent within his party and the open hostility of major opposition groups, once he passes on, the prospects are of total confusion in Sri Lanka, and there will be few left on the Sinhalese side to do battle on behalf of the agreement. The Indian Army will then either have to withdraw in ignominy or decide to try to take charge of the entire island. This is not Sunday evening rubber bridge. The domestic implications of the first alternative, and the international ones on the second, are mind boggling.

(k) The second person on whose support New Delhi is heavily banking on is M.G. Ramachandran. No hurt is intended to anyone's sentiment, it is however generally well known that the Tamil Nadu chief minister is living on borrowed kidneys. His party too is sharply divided over the merits of the Indo-Sri Lanka agreement, even as, across the political barricade, a much encouraged DMK has begun to flex its muscles. It is a dicey situation. Should M.G. Ramachandran cease to be the chief minister, events could well take an explosive turn in the state. As Tamil casualties rise in Jaffna and Batticaloa following intensified Indian Army action, things can be expected to take a turn for the worse in Tamil Nadu; the presence in the state of more than one hundred thousand Tamil refugees from Sri Lanka will be an aggravating factor.

(l) Those suggesting that, whatever the difficulties, India had no choice but to intervene in Sri Lanka, since both the LTTE and the JVP have been infiltrated by the Central Intelligence Agency and, had we not gone in, President Jayewardene would have been forced to invite the Pakistani troops in, are perhaps barking up the wrong tree. The CIA is of course a great believer in fishing in troubled waters. But why must we ignore certain other signals? About the most vociferous support for the India-Sri Lanka agreement has come from the US administration, and the Government of Pakistan has not made a squeak despite the landing of Indian troops in Sri Lanka.

(m) A final point. Whatever its other unsavoury implications, some patriots would still support the *putsch* in Sri Lanka since it would, they think, stop the Voice of America from broadcasting from the island and prevent the US navy from entering Trincomalee. This is counting the chickens before they are hatched; we do not yet know what will lead to where in Sri Lanka.

Barring one or two odd ones, each of us love our country. Each of us are full of admiration for our troops who are these days being increasingly called upon to retrieve situations which develop because of errors on the part of ruling politicians. It is also awkward to run down an international agreement which the country's Prime Minister, however ill-advised, has already signed. But, as much as in a nation's internal affairs as in its international relations, pragmatism has to have the last word. Even those who swear by ideology will see the point. Occasionally, it is important to sign treaties; occasionally, it is equally important to break away from them. It is little use repeating *ad nauseum* the banality that the Indo-Sri Lanka treaty has to be enforced. It is unenforceable. President Jayewardene cannot enforce it at his end. He has passed a few constitutional amendments, but he will find it impossible to implement decisions which could even minimally satisfy the Tamils; any attempt to do so will make a cauldron of the entire south in Sri Lanka. At the other end, the Indian Prime Minister can continue to inject more and more troops in the island; in the process he may gift himself a graveyard, but he cannot win Tamil acquiescence, history has moved much too fast of late for that to happen.

To argue that Velupillai Pirabhakaran is a fascist, or that none can run away from a personal commitment made to the Prime Minister of a great country such as India and not be made to pay for it, is therefore neither here nor there. By pursuing a course of obstinacy in Sri Lanka, the rulers in New Delhi will not win their objectives; it will only multiply misery, and, in the bargain, run the risk of destabilising our own polity, that is, destabilise it even beyond the stage already reached because of the assorted misadventures of the past few years.

A pertinent question to raise is over the modality of disengagement from Sri Lanka. It is in this context that one comes to think of the Nicaragua analogy. By turning partisans, we have destroyed our role as mediators in Sri Lanka. If we see nothing wrong in the Condatura countries taking the lead in solving the crisis of Nicaragua, we should not now cavil at the suggestion that peace negotiations be resumed in Sri Lanka, and this time under the auspices of, let us say, the SAARC organisation. We should also agree to gradually withdraw our "peacekeeping" troops and have them supplanted by a joint contingent put up by all the SAARC countries. This will mean that, in the composite force, along with the Bangladeshis and the Nepalis, the Pakistanis too will be there. It will be a great blow to our *amour propre*, but the diffusion of the hatred toward India and Indians is more important than salvaging a Prime Minister's ego. And as far as Sri Lanka Tamils are concerned, the harm the presence of Pakistani troops can do to their interests is unlikely to exceed the harm already done by the Government of India.

The Tamils whether belonging to LTTE or other hues, have strong reasons for opposing the agreement.

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The Indian primeminister can continue to inject more and more troops in the island; in the process he may gift himself a graveyard, but he cannot win Tamil acquiescence, history has moved much too fast of late for that to happen.

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THE INDEPENDENT

Thursday 31 December 1987

Tamils hold protest strike in Batticaloa

TAMIL groups organised a *hartal*, or general strike, in the eastern town of Batticaloa yesterday in protest at Sri Lankan police allegedly killing nearly 30 Tamil civilians there last weekend.

Reports reaching Colombo indicated that the *hartal* was observed by almost all of Batticaloa's 100,000 population. The town has also been the centre of considerable tension between the Tamil Tigers and the Indian peacekeeping force (IPKF).

Last Sunday's killings followed a Tamil Tiger attack on three policemen in Batticaloa market. Afterwards, according to eyewitnesses, police fired at random at people in the market in revenge for the attack. A moderate Tamil politician in Batticaloa, who did not want to be named, said the town was still tense and that people were afraid to go out.

From Bruce Palling
in Colombo

He said: "The *hartal* was very, very effective. No vehicles moved on the streets and all the shops remained closed." He added that the Indian High Commisioner to Sri Lanka, Mani Dixit, met community leaders yesterday to discuss the security situation in the town. "He told us he wanted to know what took place in the market, but I think he is just trying to cover up," the politician said.

Yesterdays *hartal* was organised by the Citizens' Committee, a Tamil human rights organisation, and the Mothers' Front, a Tamil women's group which monitors alleged human rights violations by the government.

The Indian High Commission denied government claims that last weekend's market shooting was a joint operation between the security forces and the IPKF. Despite claims from New Delhi that the Tigers can no longer muster any significant force in the country, a western correspondent who recently returned from Batticaloa said the Tigers regularly walk around with their weapons less than a mile from IPKF bases.

The Indian forces are loathe to travel on the main road north of Batticaloa as it has been heavily mined by the Tigers. Last year, the Tigers frequently called *hartals* in Batticaloa by simply exploding three hand grenades in quick succession at dawn in the centre of town. However, they are not thought to have been directly involved in organising the current strike.

The majority of Batticaloa district is of Tamil origin but there is a sizeable Muslim minority which has clashed with the Tigers over recruitment drives in the community. Press reports say the IPKF and the Sri Lankan security forces have been placed on maximum alert in the area following information that the Tigers plan to attack Batticaloa police station.

Udayan. Blitz, 26.12.87

REPORT

High Stakes Gamble

India's role in Sri Lanka has strategic advantages

"I told my commanders that it was a very difficult mission, a very sad mission and also that we would do our utmost to be fair, humane and use minimum force even at the risk of accepting more casualties than we normally would. They were told that they were going in against their own people."

General K. Sundarji, INDIA TODAY, February 1986.

THE first time Krishnaswami Sundarji issued those orders, it was as head of the Indian Army's Western Command. The mission: Operation Bluestar, the June 1984 army action to flush out terrorists from Amritsar's Golden Temple. On October 10, 1987, he found himself repeating exactly the same orders to his commanders, this time as chief of army staff. The mission: Operation Pawan, the Indian Army action to disarm the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in Sri Lanka.

Both operations bear traumatic similarities—a battle with unfamiliar constraints; the emotional involvement of the civilian population; a congested, urban battleground; a highly-motivated and heavily-armed foe of the same ethnic identity. But there the similarity abruptly ends. Bluestar was a domestic operation. Pawan has, for the first time, placed Indian troops on foreign soil to tackle the domestic problem of another country, and at considerable cost.

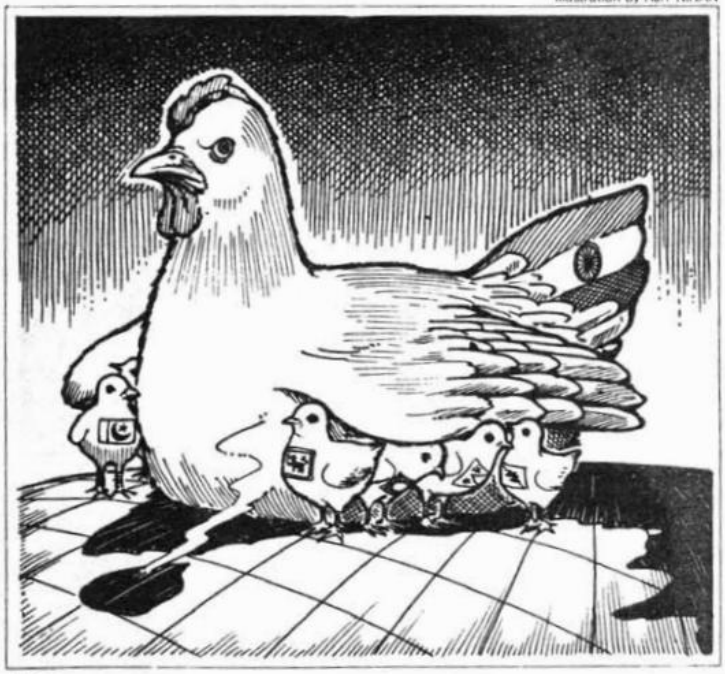
But in the eyes of South Block, Operation Pawan will be worth every paisa—and the life of every Indian soldier lost in Sri Lanka. The immediate objective may be to ensure the implementation of the Indo-Sri Lankan Accord but there is also a broader diplomatic advantage inherent in the presence of the Indian Army on the island that is designed to finally—and firmly—establish India's pre-eminence as the regional superpower.

That may be a bit premature—the accord has a long way to go before full implementation—but the current air of elation and confidence in South Block has not been in evidence since the aftermath of the 1971 operations in what is now Bangladesh. The Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) in Sri Lanka is seen as the cutting edge of the boldest Indian diplomatic initiative undertaken in recent years. Senior diplomats and army strategists refer to it as a "turning point" in its regional and international ambitions.

In army headquarters, be-medalled generals bandy phrases like: "We're living in exciting times." Others claim: "We are in the process of changing the region's history. It is tragic that we are fighting Tamils but we must use it to advantage."

In that sense, Operation Pawan (wind) is aptly named. The change in South Block, which houses the offices of the prime minister, the External Affairs Ministry and the Defence Ministry, is remarkable—and palpable. At no other time has the Indian military and political leadership marched so closely in step and to the same drummer. What diplomats refer to as "a projection of India's power", army generals translate as "the higher direction of war". The loss of lives in Sri Lanka, the financial cost and the fact that the enemy is of Tamil origin is seen as small sacrifice compared to the gains for India's long-term strategic interests. According to army sources, the loss of 266 Indian Army lives (the official toll till last week) is the minimum price they expect to pay for establishing New Delhi's "sphere of influence".

Illustration by AJIT NINAN



There is broader diplomatic advantage inherent in the presence of the Indian Army on the island that is designed to finally establish India's pre-eminence as the regional superpower.

Already, as Indian strategists point out, the effects are in evidence. In one stroke of Rajiv's Parker pen, New Delhi has ensured that the only foreign military presence in Sri Lanka will be Indian. Statements by Sri Lankan ministers like Gamini Dissanayake that the accord does not bar Colombo from having Israeli "experts", are seen as catering to a local constituency and not any climb-down on the accord.

More important, in South Block's view, is that Pakistan's military relationship with Sri Lanka has been permanently severed. Prior to the accord, Sri Lankan security forces were being trained by the Pakistan Army in Sri Lanka as well as in Pakistan. The Indian Army brass has also never forgotten that in the 1971 Indo-Pakistan war, Islamabad was allowed to use Colombo as a refuelling base for its aircraft. "That situation will never be allowed to happen again," says a senior army officer. "Pakistan's military involvement in Sri Lanka came to an end on July 29, 1987, and we intend to make certain it stays that way." Officials also point to the fact that the strategic harbour of Trincomalee is now effectively in Indian control and no longer capable of becoming another Diego Garcia. "If the Americans had been given Trinco as an R & R

(rest and recreation) base, we would have had no choice but to treble our naval force," says an Indian admiral.

South Block also points to the potential problem of having 1,20,000 refugees from Sri Lanka sitting on Indian soil indefinitely, a figure that confidential military projections say could easily have doubled had India not intervened. "What we are talking about is the prospect of another Bangladesh in Tamil Nadu. We just could not afford that to happen," says a foreign ministry source.

THESE are, of course, the obvious, immediate benefits for India. But in the high-security corner of South Block that houses the army top brass' offices, the growing pile of secret position papers, prime ministerial briefs, tactical reports and long-term strategy papers all indicate the broader diplomatic profits from India's Sri Lankan thrust—and a newly-aggressive policy which recognises the growing role of the army as a key element in that policy. Says a serving general: "The Indian Army is not the same as it was in 1962. It now fits into India's power projection."

One such secret report points out that the primary military advantage is that "you are fighting your battles outside your country" (unlike Bluestar), and this has a limited (Tamil Nadu only) domestic fall-out. Army officials insist that Operation Pawan was part of carefully-crafted, long-term strategic planning which included the possibility of high casualties in the initial stages of the operation. "Admittedly, we expected the LTTE to be less intransigent and more in our control. In that sense we miscalculated. But the prospect of the Indian Army having to take on the LTTE militarily was an option in our projections," says a general. Adds Minister of State for External Affairs K. Natwar Singh: "No government can go into an agreement of this nature without having tied up the obvious loose ends. We examined every possible option. There were no low-cost options available. If anybody can suggest a better alternative, we will gladly examine it."

In fact, the secret army papers compare Operation Pawan with the British involvement in the Falklands and forcefully insist that Sri Lanka can "under no circumstances" become another Vietnam or Afghanistan. In military terms, the Indian Army now believes that the LTTE is no longer a major threat and it is only a matter of time before the organisation, or at least a major part of it, surrenders. South Block also claims that in the event of an unconditional surrender by the LTTE, they will still be ensured accommodation in the subsequent political set-up for the north and east.

Army projections do not, however, discount the prospect of the IPKF being in Sri Lanka indefinitely. In a secret briefing paper sent to Rajiv Gandhi, Sundarji has termed a pull-out by the IPKF as "unacceptable". Says one of his key aides: "We would like to change our nomenclature from IPKF to the Accord Implementation Force. That is our main brief—to ensure that the accord is fully implemented. Pulling out before that will be political and military suicide." In the briefing papers on Operation Pawan, the army has detailed its short-term and long-term intentions which, as one states, "is to leave one unified Sri Lanka in which the Tamils are given their rightful status and Sri Lanka is not an adversary".

The Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) in Sri Lanka is the cutting edge of the boldest Indian diplomatic initiative undertaken in recent years. Senior diplomats and army strategists refer to it as the "turning point".

The short-term plan is, as the paper says, "to bend the LTTE without breaking it". The LTTE still has plenty of arms though they appear to be running short of ammunition. Intelligence sources revealed to INDIA TODAY that they are well funded by expatriate Tamils—the LTTE has recently bought a ship called the *Illyana* in Europe with the intention of loading it with arms and ammunition, sailing it to a port like Singapore and then transferring the cargo to smaller boats to try and slip through the naval blockade of the Palk Straits.

Army intelligence puts the current strength of the LTTE in Sri Lanka at 4,000 men, armed mainly with SLRs (Self-Loading Rifles), AK-47s, G-3 rifles and carbines, heavy machine-guns and RPG rocket launchers. They no longer have the ability to manufacture mines, mortars and grenades as they were doing earlier, except in very small numbers. The IPKF strength is currently 29,633 men. Palaly is the headquarters of the 54th Infantry Division which is responsible for Jaffna city, under the control of the 41st Infantry Brigade while the 91st Infantry Division has been entrusted with protecting the lives of the civilian population. The 18th Infantry Division has been deployed at Navakulli and the 115th Infantry Brigade at Point Pedro. Under the 36th Infantry Division, headquartered at Trincomalee, is the 47th Infantry Brigade at Killinoochuti, 72nd Infantry Brigade at Vavuniya, 340th (Independent) Infantry Brigade at Trincomalee and Muthur and 76th Infantry Brigade at Batticaloa. The IPKF also has one armoured regiment from 63rd Cavalry with T-72 tanks and air support from *Akbar*, the Indian name for Mi-24 helicopter gunships.

The troops involved have been deliberately chosen to represent as wide a cross-section of the Indian Army as possible and includes: the Brigade of Guards; Parachute Regiment; Para Commandos; Punjab Regiment; Grenadiers; Madras Regiment; Maratha Light Infantry; Raj-

putana Rifles: Rajput Regiment; Sikh Regiment; Sikh Light Infantry; Garhwal Rifles; Mahar Regiment and Gorkha Rifles.

ACCORDING to army intelligence assessments of the situation in Sri Lanka, the fly in the LTTE ointment is not so much Pirabhakaran as his number two, Mahattaya, the man who surfaced last fortnight to orchestrate the handing over of the 18 Indian Army prisoners held by the LTTE. "Mahattaya is now more of a hawk than Pirabhakaran who is perhaps still susceptible to influence from someone like (Tamil Nadu Chief Minister) M.G. Ramachandran Mahattaya, and perhaps the more bloodthirsty of his followers, will still carry on the battle," says an army source, adding,

PRAMOD PUSHKARNA

IPKF in Jaffna: consolidating its hold

"that means we may be there for some time in a situation comparable to Punjab today. We think India and the Indian Army is big enough to handle two Punjabs. That is the basis of our motivation."

And of South Block's indirect game plan—to spread the message of the Rajiv Doctrine to the region. South Block points out that the military offensive has been matched by a diplomatic one. Rajiv's visit to the White House, they assert, was essentially to explain India's role in Sri Lanka, and its broader regional contours. The US Administration reportedly accepted that viewpoint and, according to top sources, actually welcomed it. "Washington may value its strategic alliance with Islamabad but it is also in their interests to have stability in the region. Only India can ensure that," says the official.

That confidence is bolstered by the unspoken acceptance that the other superpower, the Soviet Union, will back New Delhi to the hilt. Soviet Premier N.T. Ryzhkov in fact, took a public stance last fortnight in "fully supporting" India's role in Sri Lanka. Obviously, it admirably suits Moscow to have India assert herself as the cock of the regional walk. The Indo-Sri Lankan agreement has also been supported at the recent Commonwealth summit, and by the European Economic Community (EEC).

The loss of lives in Sri Lanka, the financial cost of the operation and the fact that the enemy is of Tamil origin are seen as a small sacrifice compared to the gains for India's overall, long-term strategic interests.

That New Delhi has begun to assert her regional authority diplomatically is increasingly in evidence. During the recent border talks between India and China, New Delhi made it abundantly clear that Beijing's claims to Arunachal Pradesh would have to be discarded before any progress was possible. Indian officials say that the army now has the Chinese Army pinned down in Wandung on the border and will continue to apply military pressure to convince Beijing that New Delhi cannot be trifled with. That message may have gone home. The Chinese side was more accommodating than at any of the earlier border talks. Rajiv has been invited to Beijing by the Chinese leadership and a package border agreement could be on the anvil sooner than most people expect.

India has also let it be known to Nepal that it will no longer tolerate Kathmandu playing sides and has warned Nepal of the consequences of its recent intention to buy anti-aircraft guns from China. Bangladesh leader Ershad's capitulation on the Chakma refugee issue is another indicator. The Indian director-general of military operations recently informed his Pakistani counterpart that the presence of 30,000 Indian troops in Sri Lanka should not tempt Islamabad into any aggressive moves as India was quite capable of handling any military threat from across the border. Says a senior diplomat: "We want to maintain good relations with all our neighbours and respect their unity and territorial integrity. But our size and the legacy of geography has given us a responsibility and a role that we cannot shirk."

In Sri Lanka itself, the Indian Government has launched a new diplomatic offensive to win over, or at least convince of India's good intentions, the most aggressive critics of the accord. High Commissioner J.N. Dixit has, in the past fortnight, met with Sri Lankan Prime Minister Premadasa, the most rabid India-baiter in the Sri Lankan Cabinet. The meeting between the two—the first in almost 18 months—is seen in New Delhi as a major breakthrough. Dixit also met with anti-accord opposition leader and former prime minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike with much more visible success. Bandaranaike's statements after the meeting show a greater appreciation for India's role in the island than at any previous time.

In the eastern part of the island, the IPKF, under a plan called Operation Cachet, is quickly consolidating its hold in the knowledge that the LTTE's writ does not run here as in the north. IPKF sources also say that they have a plan to prevent colonisation by the Sinhalese in the eastern province—one of the main fears of the Tamils. "We are looking at the long-term implications of our involvement. Whichever way the dice falls, we have a contingency plan for it. Every move by the IPKF is approved in New Delhi. Only if there is a 50 per cent chance of success is the green signal given," says one of the officials in charge of monitoring the Sri Lankan situation.

That is perhaps the most credible sign of South Block's intentions to see the accord through to the end—and ensure that India does not suffer in the process. In

South Block, a core group of senior officers from the External Affairs Ministry and the army has been set up to monitor the situation virtually minute-by-minute. "This is a serious issue and we cannot afford to be casual about it. There is pressure on us, there is tremendous pressure on the Sri Lankan Government. But we have the expertise to handle it so that our interests, those of the Sri Lankan Government and of the Tamils in Sri Lanka are met. That is the bottom line," insists Natwar Singh.

Clearly, New Delhi has its sights set on a major diplomatic triumph and is pulling out all the stops to ensure that it is successful. But much will depend on the Sri Lankan Government and Jayewardene himself—and the unwritten agreements that have been hammered out since the accord was signed last July. The LTTE may be on the run and in disarray, but it will take a lot of convincing before the majority Sinhalese cease viewing the Indian Army as an occupation force. For Indian diplomacy, Sri Lanka represents perhaps the biggest challenge since 1971. Success will ensure that its regional status is commensurate with its size and geographical legacy. Failure will circumscribe India's diplomatic and military role for decades to come.

Considering the daunting odds, is India's regional game plan workable? Obviously, like the green signal given in New Delhi for IPKF operations, the strategy, at the present moment, seems to have a 50 per cent success ratio. But New Delhi's new aggressiveness is also obviously corelated to the timing and the new rapport that Sundarji has established with the political high command. Not since the days of Sam Maneckshaw have the armed forces wielded the kind of clout they now do in South Block. The main reason for that is Sundarji himself.

Sundarji wears his flamboyance as a badge of honour, and his powers of persuasion and oratory are legend. The office of the chief of army staff would be unrecognisable to its previous occupants. It bristles with high-tech gadgetry including laser projectors and disks that superimpose images on maps and charts to help plan military strategy and offer alternatives in different operational situations. On major exercises like Brasstacks, similar equipment stored in a special air-conditioned trailer is taken along. His aides in adjoining offices operate on computers and word processors.

BHAWAN SINGH

Sundarji's command of the language and his strategic thinking have obviously impressed the political leadership and given the military a major role in the foreign policy of the country.

The overall effect is spellbinding and Sundarji's command of the language and his strategic thinking have obviously impressed the political leadership and given the military a major say in foreign policy. His critics, and there are many even within the army, see his ambition as a flaw and have branded him a "death and glory boy", determined to secure his place in military history.

However, the army brass views him with something akin to awe and there is no denying that the man has tremendous charisma. Neither is he the maverick, General Patton-like character, his critics paint him to be. Before taking over as chief, Sundarji locked himself away in Goa to compile his personal strategic bible for the Indian Army. His briefs to the prime minister and the Cabinet are military masterpieces, brilliantly written. But there is also no denying that he could be prone to over-confidence. In looking at the regional woods, New Delhi may have missed the trees.

New Delhi's desire to flex muscle is all very well, but to accomplish that effectively also requires widespread public support. India's efforts in Sri Lanka can hardly be said to have that—only because New Delhi's explanations have not been convincing enough. And the reason for that is a crucial one—credibility, or the lack of it. If New Delhi is prepared to face the collective suspicion of the neighbours, handle domestic problems and public opinion, it cannot do so effectively without that vital ingredient. More important perhaps is the need for the image of a strong Indian leadership in the international context. Mrs Gandhi was respected by international leaders for precisely that and there was consequently less resistance to her regional policies. Without a strong leadership, domestic stability and public support, New Delhi will be seriously hampered in its regional efforts. The stakes in Sri Lanka may be high but so is the risk of failure. As one general soberly admits: "If we fail, it will not be Rajiv's Waterloo but India's Waterloo."

—DILIP BOBB

REPORT

TIGERS SITTING PRETTY ON INDIAN T-72 M TANKS

Three weeks ago, the Indian Peace-Keeping Force (IPKF) in Jaffna launched an all-out action against the Tamil militants to recover two T-72 M **tanks that had been captured by the LTTE.** There is still no confirmation available on how long the operation went on and whether the tanks were recovered. Reputed to be one of the finest in the world today and the best in the armoury of the Indian Army, **these Russian-made tanks were lost** more because of the folly of those manning them than due to any LTTE ambush.

According to informed sources, these tanks were captured by the LTTE after they had been abandoned by the IPKF after having been run over by land mines. While three of the five tanks involved in this particular action were completely destroyed, the other two lost their tracks on contacting the mines. The tracks, like watch straps, are the wheel belts on which these tanks run. Normally, when the tanks are damaged by land mines, they become immobile. But they are capable of firing all their guns and armament. Also, no harm other than psychological accrues to the crew. The crew is provided with complete cooked rations for 72 hours and a full set of spares. The tracks, according to sources, could have been repaired in 90 minutes but in this case, discretion was considered the better part of valour and the tanks were more or less given away as gifts by **the three-man crew who abandoned them and took to their heels.**

In situations like this, the potency of the weapon is utilised to ward off any attack before making an attempt to assess and repair the damage. Unbelievable, however, no such effort was made in this case. The T-72 M has an awesome arsenal - 44 rounds of 125 mm main gun ammunition, 11 x 50 rounds of 7.62 mm machine gun ammo and 7 x 60 rounds of 12.7 mm anti- air-craft ammo. It has a fuel capacity of 1201 litres of diesel which is enough to carry the tank around cross country for 250 km. One round of the 125 mm main gun is enough to destroy one T-72 tank and it is this potency of the abandoned tanks that forced the IPKF to try and recover the tanks. **What made the task more urgent was the fact that the LTTE is said to have repaired the tanks to some extent.**

This, however, is not the only known report of loss of tanks.

Amongst the first to move into Sri Lanka soon after the Accord was signed was the 76 Armoured Regiment of the 54 Infantry Division. Based in Secundrabad, the 76 Armoured Regiment took part in the middle of 1986 in an ambitious programme named "Exercise Trishakti." This encompassed for the first time in the history of the Indian Armed Forces all the three services in an ambitious assault landing operation by sea. This preceded Brass Tacks on Pakistan border by a few months and was supposedly **a dress rehearsal for a possible operation in Sri Lanka.** The 76 Armoured Regiment which has the India-made Vijayanta tanks practised landings at leisure in the Andaman islands as part of Exercise Trishakti.

According to reports, the 76 Armoured regiment suffered serious loss in Sri Lanka.

Informed sources confirm that seven Vijayanta tanks were destroyed by the LTTE by hand-held launchers of the Rocket Propelled Grenade (RPC) - 7 variety. In fact, it was discovered that the Vijayanta were sitting ducks for the hit-and-run marauders of Prabhakaran. Consequently, the T-72 M was rushed to Jaffna since this modern tank is over 90 per cent immune from not only rocket launchers type of weapons but also from the dreaded Tow anti-tank missile. This is because the T-72 M has the Russian version of the Chaubham armour which is a highly secret steel and alloy combine with a mesh of ceramics and can absorb and dissipate large amounts of Kinetic energy attacks. This is unlike the Vijayanta whose armoured plates are thin and can be easily penetrated.

One complete armoured unit, the 65 Armoured Regiment of 31 Armoured Division, was rushed from Jhansi to Sri Lanka. It has two of their tanks that hit the land mines and were 'closed down'. Soon after this episode, it has been learnt that an independent squadron of T-72 M has been rushed from Bhuj in the Rann of Kutch for operations in Sri Lanka.

Tanks have not been the only weapons that the IPKF has lost in Sri Lanka.

In the early stages of their operation against the Tigers, the IPKF lost seven armoured personnel carriers also known as the BMP-1. This vehicle which has a crew of three and stick of seven (in military parlance, seven persons to fire the weapons), were also destroyed by the rock-propelled grenades of the LTTE. The APC is employed to move the infantry component cross country to keep pace with mechanised forces.

The IPKF has also lost valuable helicopters in Jaffna. In the early days of the Peace-keeping mission, three supply-dropping MI-8 helicopters were downed by the LTTE. The result was that the army top brass decided to send in the missile-mounted heavier MI-25 attack helicopter. Not surprisingly, two of these **choppers were shot down.**

According to sources, the Tigers have been using the deadly Stinger missiles which the Americans have been supplying to the Afghan rebels in Pakistan and are available commonly in the arms bazaar of Rawalpindi as also in the infamous arms bazaar in Singapore. What's the strength of the IPKF in Sri Lanka? With the entire 54 division in Jaffna, that would mean about a fighting strength of 20,000. The total would be much more. Besides, a couple of brigades from divisions in central India (Kota), a regiment from Jhansi and an independent squadron from Bhuj are in Sri Lanka. Observers put the IPKF strength at about 50,000 to 60,000.

Earlier this week, it was leaked that the IPKF was thinking of thinning out in Sri Lanka. It was also learnt that about 12,000 troops would be pulled back. Generally, about one-fourth of the fighting strength is pulled out at any given time from any theatre of operation. That would mean the fighting strength is 48,000.

(Organiser,20-12-87)

AFFIDAVIT

IYAMPILLAI KATHIRAVELU (44) 758/A, Araly East, Araly,

On 21.12.87 there was intense shelling and gun fire in our area. We left our house and were running to take shelter in a temple close to our house.

The shellings continued for sometime. My daughter Pavitha, aged 5 years, died of shock.

The body was buried on 22.12.87 at the cemetery at Araly.

ANTONYPILLAI MARIANAYAGAM (62) of "Elilagam", Sillalai, Pandatheruppu.

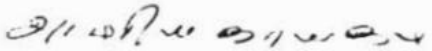
The deceased person Marianayagam Eustas Senthilkumaran aged 19 years was my son.

He was an advanced level student at St. Anthony's College, Illavalai.

On 22.12.87 while I was in Colombo I received a message that my son was shot and killed by the army on 19.12.87 at Sillalai.

I was also informed that my son's remains were buried at Sillalai burial grounds on 21.12.87.

I have a surviving son named Virgil Kumaran aged 21 years.



PONNAN PASUPATHY (55) Tholpuram Veerawathai.

The deceased Pasupathy Parvathy, aged 50 years was my wife.

She was employed as a farm labourer at the time of her death.

On 23.12.87 morning my wife left home for work.

At around 2 p.m. I was informed that my wife was killed in a shell explosion while she was working in a rice field.

Due to the shelling I could not go to the scene of the tragedy immediately.

Later I secured a permission from the IPKF and removed her body and buried on 24.12.87.

I SEETHEVI wife of Murugan Kiddinan Periyamathavadi, Chavakachcheri Road, Thunnalai South, Karaveddi.

My husband late Murugan Kiddinan was dead due to army attack on 24.12.87. He is 47 years at the time of death. His body was cremated at Verondai.

I have four children under 18 years. They all are attending school.

My husband was only the sole breadwinner in the family. I have no other source of income at all.

I find it very difficult to look after my childrens' need without any income.

PUVANESWARY SHANMUGADASAN (35) Palaly South, Vasavilan.

The deceased Nagamani Shanmugadasan, aged 46 years was my husband.

He was employed as a farm labourer at the time of his death.

On 24.12.87 my husband left home at around 7.00 A.M. saying that he is going to the village Pillayar Temple.

At around 11.00 A.M. I was informed that he was shot by the Army near the Temple.

At around 1.00 P.M. some people brought him some with severe injuries, as they were unable to take him to the Hospital due to the tension prevailed at the time.

He died at around 2.00 P.M. and we cremated his body the same day.

I have a daughter and son.

After his death we do not have any income; as a result we are undergoing untold sufferings both mentally and financially.

RATNASINGHAM THAVAPILLAI (26) Thelpuram West, Veerawathai.

The deceased Kanagan Ratnasingham aged 26 years was my husband.

He was working as a casual labourer at the time of his death.

On 24.12.87 my husband left home for work as usual.

After he left home there was sheavy shelling and firing from helicopter at Ponnalai.

At around 1.00 p.m. I was informed that my husband was killed by a shell fired from a helicopter.

My brother brought my husband body home and we cremated it on the same day.

I have two children

I find it very difficult to survive after my husband's death due to lack of income.

I NAGALINGAM SELLH, (55), Tholpuram West, Chulipuram.

The deceased Kanapathy Nagalingam, aged 55 years was my husband.

He was a fisherman.

On 26.12.87 my husband left home at around 7 a.m. saying that he is going to Ponalai.

At about 2.30 p.m. I was informed that my husband collapsed and died due to shock at Aladi when the nearby Ponnalai bridge was shelled from a helicopter.

His body was brought home on the same day.

I have one unmarried daughter.

I used to suffer from frequent dizziness and unable to withstand travelling.

I do not have any income after my husband's death.

Mrs. KAMALADEVI STEPHEN (33), Konduvil Lane, Chavakachcheri.

My husband Alfred Robert Louise Stephen (29) my two children and I were residing at Kanduvil Lane, Chavakachcheri.

My husband was the owner of a Tea Kiosk situated at the bus stand at Chavakachcheri.

On 27.12.87 he left home at about 5 a.m. and proceeded to his shop.

At about 12.30 p.m. there was an aerial attack on the Chavakachcheri market area in which bombers and helicopter gunships were used by the IPKF.

Suspecting that my husband's tea kiosk too could have been affected in this aerial attack, I ran to the market area when the helicopter and bombers had ceased their attack.

I found my husband's tea kiosk badly damaged and my husband's dead ,body was in the debris.

My husband has gaping injuries on his head and shoulder.

The dead body of my husband was removed to Point-Pedro for burial on 26.10.87.

My two children and I were entirely dependent on the profits derived by my husband from the tea kiosk.

My children aged 4 and 2 and I have been made destitute by the death of my husband.

PONNIAH ANNAPILLAI (42) Tholpuram West, Verrawathai, Chulipuram.

The deceased Marimuthu Ponniah aged 46 yearsw was my husband.

He was employed as a coconut plucker at the time of his death.

On 27.12.87 my husband as usual went out in his bicycle to attend his daily work.

After he left, fierce shelling started and we were highly worried about his safety.

Later some one came and informed us that my husband was killed by shell explosion while crossing the Ponnalai Bridge.

Immediately I went to the scene and removed his shell ridden body and cremated it on the same day.

I have five children

I am unable to feed my children after the sudden demise of my husband.

I was also injured during an earlier offensive and unable to do any meaning-full work.

RATNAM PUVANESWARY (26) Tholagatty, Vasavilan.

The deceased Rasu Ratnam, aged 27 years was my husband.

He was employed as a farm labourer at the time of his death.

On 27.12.87 I was informed that my husband was shot and killed in a crossfire between the army and the rebels while he was on his way home from Jaffna after work.

His body was brought home on 28.12.87 and was cremated on the same day.

I have a son Vijayaroopan (8)

After my husband's tragic death we do not have any income.

VARIVELAN (62) Suthanthirapuram, Vasavilan.

The deceased Velan Janaki aged 32 years was my daughter.

During the last week of December 1987 there were shelling and firing by the army in our neighbour-hood.

A shell fell within our compound and exploded.

My Daughter feel ill due to the intense shock caused by the explosion and died without recovering on 28.12.8

We could not seek medical assistance due to the situation prevailed during that period.

He cremation took place at Kuttiyapulam cemetry on the same day.

SUBRAMANIAM NAGESWARY (39) Vasavilan South, Vasavilan.

My husband Moothathamby Subramaniam (Aged 49) is suffering from Paralysis for the last four years and he is bed ridden, incapable of doing any work.

The deceased Karthikesu Moothathamby, aged 70, is my Father-in-law. He was a Farmer by profession and he was supporting my family which consists of my bed ridden husband and my three children.

On 28th. of December 1987, at about 8.00 a.m., while we were at our residence there were continuous terrible sound of Mortar shelling. My Father-in-law above named who was living with us suddenly fainted and he died at the spot.

The prevailed tension did not permit us in proceeding the Sudden Death Inquest, as such no Inquest was held in this connection. Cremation took place on the same evening at 3.00 p.m., at Pillayan Hadu Hindu Cemetery, Vasavilan.

The deceased Karthikesu Moothathamby had no other son or daughter except my husband.

The death of my Father-in-law above named has caused irrepairable loss to us. He has left my bed ridden husband, my daughters and me without no source of income.

SELLATHAMBY GNANAMMAH, (46) Katuvan South, Tellipalai.

I am the mother of the deceased Sellathamby Arumainayagam, aged 22 years.

He was employed as a Cigar Roller.

On 29.12.87 at about 8 A.M. my son left home as usual for the work.

At about 5 P.M. I came to know that my son was shot and killed by an army patrol while he was returning home from work near Muniappan Temple Kattuvan.

On hearing the news I rushed to the scene of incident and saw his body which bore several gunshot marks.

His body was cremated at the Tellipalai cemetery on 30.12.87.

My husband is affected with paralysis and unemployed.

It was my dead son who bore the family burden in place my invalid husband

I have three surviving children.

KANAGALINGAM KANTHAVADIVU, (22)
No. 599 3177V, West, Inuvil.

I am the sister of Kanagalingam Nathan who was arrested by the IPKF on 29.12.87 and who died in IPKF custody.

I live with my widowed mother and two sisters and a disabled younger brother of 13 years, at the above address.

My brother who was arrested by the IPKF was 35 years of age. He worked at the Uduvil Village Council and supported my mother and his brother and sisters.

During the October/November 1987 disturbances, my mother and the rest of the family took refuge at the Pararajasekera Pillayar Temple at Invuil.

By December 27th we returned home. It was also announced over the radio that those who surrendered to the IPKF would be well treated.

My said brother Kanagalingam Nathan was earlier arrested by the Lankan Security Forces in August 1981 and released on 15th January, 1982.

On the advice of some neighbours who said that therefore my brother might be re-arrested by the IPKF and that it would be prudent to surrender to the IPKF and announced over the radio my brother voluntarily reported at the IPKF Camp at Inuvil on 29.12.87 at about noon.

The youngest child who is an infant is under the custody maintenance and care of a relation named Sinniah Sivasubramaniam.

I have children and my husband is a poor farmer.

SINNIAH SIVASUBRAMANIAM (42) Madathady, Sirupiddy North, Neervely.

Navaratnam Vasanthy, aged 23 years was my cousin sister.

On 7.12.87 at about 3.30 p.m. there was a confrontation between the army and the militants near my cousin sister's house.

At 5.00 p.m. I came to know that my cousin sister and her husband Selvanayagam Navaratnam were killed after being caught in the cross fire.

I rushed to my cousinsister's house and found her body lying about 75 yards from her house.

My brother-in-law's body was found in the court-yard.

My cousin sister's body bore a gunshot wound on her stomach.

With the permission of the army we cremated their bodies on 8.12.87 at Kinthiciddy cemeterv, Sirupiddy.

The eldest child Yasotha is under the custody, maintenance, and care of Sinnarajah Thangamalar who is a sister of my late brother-in-law.

The infant Ambiga is under my custody maintenance and care.

I am a poor farmer and have four children.

KANAPATHY NAGALINGAM (52)
Kondavil North, Kondavil.

I am a Retired Govt. Servant.

My wife, children and I were living in our hut at the above said address.

My son Nagalingam Sritharan age 27 years was a casual employee in Kachoberi, Jaffna.

On 8.12.87 my son did not go for work as he was ill.

At about 10.30 A.M. the same day firing was heard in our locality and people fled to the temple close to our house and my family and I too fled to the said temple.

When we were in the temple Indian Peace Keeping Force personnel about 30 in number came there.

My son's dead body was found the same day with cut injuries on his abdomen and gun shot wounds.

The dead body of my son was removed to a barren land closely and cremated the same day as the IPKF had imposed 3 days continuous curfew in our village and the dead body could not be removed to the cemetery.

About 4 innocent people were killed on this day, and several injured.

Besides my said son, I have 3 sons and 3 daughters all under 18 years.

THAMBIAH NAVAMANY (55) Shanthathoddam, Puloly East, Puloly.

The deceased Thambiah Karunamathirasa, aged 22 years was my son.

He was a vegetable vendor.

On 10.12.87 about 7.00 a.m. my son went by bicycle to Innuvil to puchase onions.

He did not return that day or the following day.

Later on 13.12.87 at about 10 a.m. I learnt through my nephew that my son was shot dead between Neervely and Kopay north while returning with onions on 10.12.87 at about 3.30 p.m. caught in a cross fire between the army and the militants.

I also learnt that this body was cremated in the adjoining garden on the same day.

No post mortem examination was held.

I have two unmarried daughter and two sons.

After my husband's death it was my late son who supported our family.

After his demise we are without any income or support.

ARIYARAJAH MAHESWARY (38) Maviddapuram West, Tellipalai.

The deceased child Yalini Ariarajah aged 1 year was my daughter.

On 11.12.87 at about 12.00 noon a shell fell inside our house and exploded.

My daughter died instantaneously after being struck by shrapnels.

Her body was buried at Maviddapuram Cemetry on the following day.

I have a son (5)

My eldest son (7) was also killed in the above blast.

I also sustained an injury in the above incident.

GUNARATNAM RANJANA, (35) Tellipalai East, Tellipalai

The deceased Kanapathipillai Punniyamoorthy, aged 65 years was my father-in-law.

On 11.12.87 a shell fell within our compound and exploded.

My father-in-law was struck by shell splinters and died instantaneously.

His body was cremated at Alavetty North cemetery.

My husband is affected with rheumatisim and an invalid.

Mrs. NESAMMAH SELLATHURAI
Kondavil North, Kondavil.

The deceased is my husband Kasy Sellathurai age 45 years.

I am living at the address given above.

My husband was a fishvendor going about on a bicycle.

On 11.12.87 he left home 8 a.m.

He did not return home that evening I searched for him along the road which he usually takes.

Since there was shelling and firing at Konavil on that day I was worried.

After about two days I saw his bicycle in the Nanthavil field and the decomposed body close to that.

The skull was damaged and there was injury in the neck and there was blood marks all over.

The body was removed and cremated by me.

I attach the death Certificate No. 861.

Cause of death -Profuse bleeding from injury caused by gun shot.

I have 7 children the eldest is 18 years and the youngest is 4 years.

I have nobody who could help me.

The bread winner of my family is dead.

I have no means of living.

LETTER

Collective responsibility is a cardinal principle of any working democracy. But in Sri Lanka it appears to be fast running on the political loopline periodically Indian aligned and maligned.

When Parliament debated the much trumpetted Provincial Council Bill our Foreign Minister compared the cabinet to a packet of assorted biscuits.

Ready wittedly the Leader of the Opposition retorted - a packet of rottten biscuits.

The general public are at a loss to understand how any national minded Sri Lankan or the Urban Guerrilla leader Prabakaran would be convinced when the ruling hierachy had taken a surprisingly uncommon stand and perhaps ideologically divided on a crucial bill brought to parliament at the cost of thousands of valuable human lives.

The opposition too fanned the flame instead of dousing the communal fire presumably to quench their power thirst. Added to the misery the state media also stoops to opportunist propaganda with misleading and fabricated interpretations.

This had a direct bearing almost across the Palk Strait and the Indian radio too started to tune against the LTTE in combat by smoke screening the basic cause of dispute.

In fairness to the minority, the Indo-Lanka Accord was thrust on them against their will and particularly in the absence of adequate parliamentary representation of their choice. The last four and a half years, the north and east and to a little extent the south have witnesed a painful ordeal of cold blooded murders on an unprecedented scale by the terorists and counter killing by state forces.

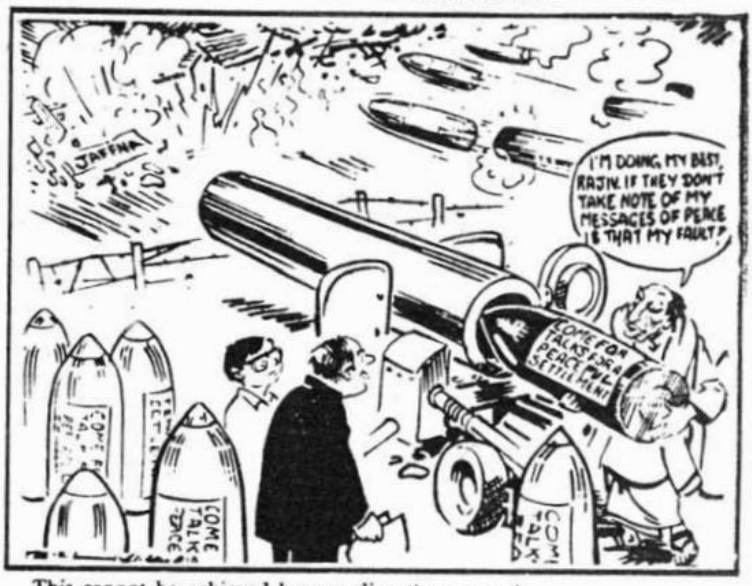
Prior to the Indo-Lanka peace accord India embarked on an anti Lanka propaganda worldwidely based on the following factors:

1. Sri Lankan forces are the most indisciplined.
2. State orders the killing of its own ruling minority even to the extent of deploying air and naval force to help its regular infantry.
3. The combined state force, being given an enhanced pay packet a phenomenon unheard in the annals of any military history to combat terrorism within the country at an alarming cost to the national exchequer.

Charges of vacillation and genocide were levelled against Sri Lanka by no less a person than the Indian Premier Mr. Rajiv Gandhi and his Foreign Minister for the failure of the Sri Lankan government to reach a political solution. The Indian Premier even made use of all international forums to spice his arguments advocating political solution and never any military solution to Sri Lanka's ethnic problem.

Consequent to the Indo-Lanka Peace Accord, the Indian army has engaged in inflicting heavy casualties among the Tamil civilians and also does a subtle and spiteful propaganda against the LTTE to camouflage the excesses by its own military units. The undue haste shown by Sri Lanka and India for the re-settlement of the eastern sector and the surrendering of the arms by the LTTE are inadequately reflected in their efforts to implement the peace accord.

R.K. Lakshman, The Times of India


JAFFNA
I'M DOING MY BEST, RAJIV. IF THEY DON'T TAKE NOTE OF MY MESSAGES OF PEACE IS THAT MY FAULT?
COME FOR TALKS FOR A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT
COME TALKS PEACE

This cannot be achieved by muzzling the regional press, clamping down indefinite curfew, indiscriminate killing of defenceless civilians, shelling of educational institutions and intellectuals and damaging the agricultural and fishing industry of the north and east. Instead the IPKF could negotiate with the LTTE, disband the "THREE STARS" undoubtedly an IPKF's Trojan horse and create a climate conducive to the fearless, secured, healthy and happy living of the minority Tamils.

It has become sine qua non for the LTTE too to take stock of the dire consequences of fighting a losing battle resourcelessly with the Indian army and go to the negotiating table. Indian Gandhism, Lankan Budhism or Hinduism cannot be taught through the mouth of machine guns. The concept of truth and non violence should not be taken for a ride. The leaders concerned must practise what they preach and that too when the writings are on the wall in the simmering south of Sri Lanka. **M. Selvasunderam**
Sinnamalai, Thondaimanaru

REPORT

UNI reports from Colombo:

The simmering differences within the Sri Lankan Government over the handling of the Sinhala extremists in the south burst into the open on Thursday with a senior Cabinet Minister declaring that the Government had "no moral right" to remain in power.

Speaking to newsmen at the funeral of the chairman of the ruling United National Party, Harsha Abeywardene, who was shot dead along with three others in the city yesterday by suspected extremists, the Finance Minister, Mr. Ronnie de Mel, called for a truce and dialogue with the proscribed Janata Vimukti Peramuna (JVP) and holding of provincial and parliamentary elections.

"If we don't have elections before next year. there is going to be big trouble," he said.

Mr. De Mel said the Sri Lankan Army could not fight this war and added, "we might have to ask the Pakistan Army to come to the south, and I am not joking."

He said there were only 17 elected members in parliament and the others had come through referendum or were nominated. "I have stopped referring to Sri Lankan as a democracy since 1982 because there is no democracy." It was for the President to decide the time for the elections.

There was a perpetual state of insurrection in the country and "the situation is very bad, getting worse every day," he said. On an average 20 people are daily killed in violence in the island.

Mr. De Mel said the news of Abeywardene's death was received when the Cabinet was discussing the JVP threat. He said he told the Cabinet that this was what would happen if they did not solve the problem now.

Earlier, winding up the budget debate in Parliament, Mr. De mel said that many of the country's present trouble stemmed from the failure to hold elections. Describing the present parliament as "obsolete" Mr. De Mel hoped that elections would be held next year.

PEACE OFFENSIVE: A couple of wary Jaffna Citizens | at Mandaitivu on Thursday. *Express*

LETTER

THE RISING NATION

The story on Sri Lanka made an interesting reading. It is, indeed, a tragedy that India has got entangled in Sri Lankan rigmarole. We are doing what the Russians did to Afghanistan. A president does not make a nation. Though we can justify our act by claiming that it was Jayewardene who invited us, the truth is that we have hurt the pride of the Sri Lankans. People are never amiable to alien troops on their land and indications are that the growing intransigence of Sri Lankan ministers is likely to intensify. The ordinary citizens of Sri Lanka are equally dismayed. Can the accord be successful ?

The Sri Lankan debacle has illustrated, once again, the political immaturity of Rajiv Gandhi. Men who forget their past are condemned to repent again, so goes the saying. Rajiv is an example of the recondite statement. The Punjab accord met with an abject failure because the time-framework for solving the problem was only a manifestation of wishful thinking. Such simplistic approach created more problems to the existing ones. The Indo-Sri Lanka accord too was a product of such insights.

We must put the past behind, and should aim to get out of Sri Lanka in the near future. Otherwise we will have to read Sri Lanka for Vietnam and the U.S. for India and the generations to come will condemn us for our folly.

C.V. Kamesh Bangalore

GANDHI'S QUAGMIRE

"Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi has bitten off more than he can chew in Sri Lanka (Nov.9), where his peace-keeping forces have become embroiled in a protracted guerrilla war. In Bangladesh, India functioned as a midwife, but in Sri Lanka, it has assumed the role of abortionist. Facing destabilizing attempts by Sinhalese radicals, Sri Lanka's President, Junius Jayewardene, may have to lean more and more on Indian forces to prop himself up. An indefinite stay by Indian troops would eventually make Sri Lanka an Indian protectorate."

Pravin Kumar *(Time,* Dec.7,1987)

LETTER

RAPED

SRI THURKKA COMMUNITY CENTRE
Punnalaikadduvan North
02, January 1988

The Hon. Prime Minister,
INDIA.

Honoured Sir,

REVIEW OF POSITION AFTER THE ARRIVAL OF I.P.K.FORCE

We, the residents of Punnalaikadduvan North have to bring to your kind attention regarding the atrocities done by your Indian Peace Keeping Force.

(1) The residents of this village were called upon to vacate their house and to go to temples. In response to this call Mr. Sinnadurai Manoharan also went to Pillaiyar Temple at Kupilan as a refugee. The Jawans who entered the temple without giving recognition to the Hindu Culture with boots etc assaulted the youths found inside the temple and ordered the above named sinnadurai Manoharan to enter the ADHIMOOLAM (the extreme interior portion of the Temple), simultaneously ordered to ring the bell of the temple and shot at him through his ears, and he died at the spot. He is an innocent poor, the only breadwinner in his fatherless famjly. We will produce witnesses if and when called for.

(2) Nearly three Jawans entered the house of Moothathamby Kanageswary, harrassed and molested her, and looted her house too.

(3) Same number of Jawans entered Mr. Nagammuthu Saravanai's house tried to molest his daughters and because of the noise they made the Jawans looted their house and damaged it.

(4) Kasipillai Thevasamy's house was looted by the I.P.K.F. Eye witness could be produced.

(5) Most of the girls in this village were molested and raped. There are people who witness these activities.

(6) Mr. Arumugam and his son-in-law were shot dead. These two were innocent public and they do not belong to LTTE. The FREEDOM FIGHTING GROUP. The details of killings and massacre by the IPKF will be sent to you in due course.

(7) The Library situated beside Thurga Dhevi Temple badly damaged by the I.P.K.F. The books found inside the library and the furnitures were burnt.

(8) The statistics of the House damanged or burnt will be produced it and when necessary.

(9) The residence of the high Priest of the Temple was looted and damaged by the I.P.K.F.

(10) All plantations crops viz. grapes plantains, chillies etc. were damage by the maximum.

The above facts clearly show that the motive of the I.P.F. Force is also to continue the atrocities of the Sri Lankan president to annihilate the Tamil race from Sri Lanka and to spoil the Tamils economy. So we kindly beg of your to put a stop to all these attrocities and save the Tamils.

Yours faithfully

((60 people signed)

CIVILIANS □ KILLED (Operation Pawan)

P. Dharmakularaja 1.12.87

Thaiyalmuthu 1.12.87

K. Anandaraja 5.12.87

V. Karthikesu 6.12.87

N. Nagendra Raja 9.12.87

K. Sudarsan 11.12.87

M. Jeevaratnam 14.12.87

V. Anbalagan 16.12.87

Arulambalam 16.12.87

Namachivayam 16.12.87

K. Nallathamby 17.12.87

N. Panneerselvam 18.12.87

M. Sabesan 19.12.87

E. Senthilkumaran 19.12.87

T. Yasodharan 19.12.87

Mrs. V. Manonmani 20.12.87

S. Parameswaran 21.12.87

S. Selladurai 21.12.87

(Operation Pawan) CIVILIANS □ KILLED

URUMPIRAI

R. Prabakaran	S. Chelliah
Kathiran Iyankan	C. Thurairatnam
P. Sinnathamby	K. Navaratnam
Ponnu THarmalingam	K. Vincent
Selliah Ganeshalingam	G. Sinnathangam
Kanthan Thillaiyan	**M. Umathevy**
Nallammah Veeran	**Sinnappu**
K. Gunarasa	S. Elias
S. Jeyarubi	**Sinnathurai**
Ponnan Iyal	Nallathamby
S. Rasanayagam	**Thangammah**
M. Periyasamy	**Ponnammah**
K. Mahinthiran	**Subathirai**
Nagammah	T. Selvanayagam
V. Shanmugalingam	K. Balasubramaniam
V. Sivasaranam	S.Kandiah
K. Ariyaratnam	**S. Pathmanathan**
S. Thambithurai	P. Ainkaran
Jeyaluksmi	S. Santhirapalan
N. Kanagalingam	I. Sithampara
M. Nadarajah	S. Sinnathurai
I. Ponnampalam	**Prema**
S. Panchalingam	S. Suppa
T. Thurairajah	K. Senthuramany
T. Pratheepan	K. Easwaranathan
T. Kaithili	P. Sinnathamby
T. Puvaneswari	K. Rajivan
T. Rasamalar	S. Selvanayagam
A. Thirunavukarasu	**Manoranjitham**
L. Narayanan	**Maheswari**
K. Thambirasa	**Shanthi**
S. Sellathurai	**Rasaledchumy**
N. Velautham	T. Rasaratnam
T. Kanagasabai	**I. Alagammah**

இருப்பின் தேவை

விழிகளில் முள் முளைத்த அக்ரமம்
சூரியன் பாதியாய் சிதறிய கொடூரம்
வானம் பூமியை
அமுக்குகின்றதாய் உள்ளுணர்வு
சாபத்தின் படிமமாய்
எங்களது வாழ்வின் பொருள் சிதறிய
உயிர்க்கவிதைகள்.

எந்தப் பொழுதிலும்
காற்று-
நிணமாய் மாறும்.

இலேசாக
மூக்கினூடேயும்
சில வேளைகளில் வாயினூடாகவும்
சீழ்வாங்கி வெளியாகும் காற்று
மூச்சடைப்பாக நெரிப்பதன் பொருளென்ன?

நகம் வளர்ந்த கொள்கைகளால்
மனிதத்தின் உன்னதங்கள்
பிரண்டப்பட்டன.
எங்களது இருப்பின் தேவையும்
சுதந்திரமும்
ஊரின் ஒவ்வோர் புறமும்
முகாம்களின் முள்வேலிக்குள்
முடிச்சிறுகிக் கிடக்கின்றன.

வாழ்வு அர்த்தமற்றதாய்
என் நினைவுகளில் தெறிக்கிறது.
எனினும்
உயிர்ப்பின் ரகசியம்
உள்மனம் அறியும்.

எஸ். கருணாகரன்

COMMENT

PUBLIC SUPPORT & ARMY

Fall-Out Of Sri Lanka Involvement

23.12.87

S. K. SINHA

WHILE there was no anti-army feeling in India before Independence even though the army was a major instrument of colonial rule, the military's popularity increased immediately afterwards because of its operations in Kashmir, Junagadh, Hyderabad and later, Goa. But Lt-General S. K Sinha, the former Vice-Chief of Army Staff, argues that the public response has changed in the wake of military involvement in Punjab and Sri Lanka. Fearing that the people of Punjab might not extend the same cooperation in the event of a new India-Pakistan conflict, General Sinha also warns that heightened emotions in Tamil Nadu over the IPKF's activities in Sri Lanka might "ignite a combustible combination of linguistic fundamentalism and ethnic chauvinism".

R.K. Lakshman, Times of India, 20.12.87.

IF India has been fortunate in that she is the only major Third World country whose army has always remained apolitical the army has been equally fortunate in always enjoying the esteem and support of the people. Even in the dark days of 1962, there was an upsurge of popular support for the army, despite the humiliating reverses suffered by it. However, of late this relationship between the army and the people or more precisely certain segments of the people, has been under strain. This development needs to be viewed against the backdrop of history.

The present Indian army was a major instrument in the hands of the British who created it to establish their imperial rule over this country. Yet this army did not incur public antipathy. The feeling of nationhood was non-existent among our people in the 18th century, and no odium attached to Indian soldiers fighting for the British against Indian rulers. The army serving a foreign power was no doubt a colonial army but it was not an army of mercenaries. Men enlisted because fighting was their profession and they fought for honour —the honour of their family, their community, their religion and their regiment.

Be that as it may, it was this very army that stirred up national spirit within the country. The Great Uprising of 1857 was essentially an army affair though it inspired successive generations of our countrymen in the struggle for freedom. When Mahatma Gandhi launched his mass movement in the 20th century, the British generally used the police and the British army in India to combat the movement. Notwithstanding the Jallianwala Bagh incident, the Indian army was sparingly used in this rôle.

The refusal of Garhwali soldiers to open fire on non-violent Khudai Khidmatgars at Peshawar in 1930 may have resulted in their being court martialled and punished, but it won them popular admiration. And in World War II, the contribution of the Indian National Army, comprising Indian army soldiers who had been taken prisoner by the Japanese, constituted an important landmark in the history of our freedom struggle. After the war, the mutinies at Bombay, Jabalpur and Karachi sounded alarm bells for the imperial power heavily influencing its decision to quit.

The past has been recounted in some detail to bring out the fact that there was no anti-army feeling in the country before Independence, even though it had constituted a major element upholding British imperial rule. Comparisons may be odious but it may be mentioned that, for a variety of reasons which need not be discussed here, there was a strong anti-police feeling when we became independent. Unfortunately, this outlook has persisted even after Independence. On the other hand, in the decades following Independence, the army has been able to carve out a special place for itself in the hearts of the people.

Within weeks of Independence it was called upon to fight a war in Kashmir and in the process gained considerable popular support. Operations in Junagadh, Hyderabad and Goa further endeared it to the people. During the 1962, 1965 and 1971 wars, neither ideological nor religious considerations came in the way of the nation remaining completely united in support of the army. The people in Punjab, particularly the Sikhs, willingly exposed themselves to risk and on their own carried food for the soldiers in forward trenches.

The army's disciplined and impartial conduct during communal disturbances has enhanced popular esteem for it. Thus, whether at Bhiwandi, Meerut, Moradabad or Ahmedabad, the minority community has demanded and welcomed the deployment of the army to restore order.

With mounting external threats and increasing internal dangers, the eighties have been a period of worsening security. Concurrently a new phenomenon has surfaced, first in Punjab and now in Tamil Nadu. After Ope-

ration Bluestar the Sikhs felt alienated leading to an anti-army feeling among many of them In the event of another Indo-Pakistani war, it is doubtful if the army will get the same sort of cooperation from people in Punjab as it did in 1965 and 1971. And now in the wake of operations in Sri Lanka some Tamils in Tamil Nadu are becoming alienated, explaining Mr Prabhakaran's reported brithday celebrations in Madras, and demonstrations against the Indian peace keeping force which has even been dubbed the Innocent People's Killing Force!

Virulent propaganda has been unleashed against our troops, an MP even accusing them of genocide in Sri Lanka. Having lost the military battle in Jaffna, the LTTE has launched a smear campaign to win the propaganda war. Prolonged operations in Sri Lanka can make matters worse. While trying to douse a bush fire in Sri Lanka, we may find sparks falling over Tamil Nadu which may ignite a combustible combination of linguistic fundamentalism and ethnic chauvinism.

The Defence Minister stated recently that there could be no talks with the LTTE till they surrendered their weapons, implying that if they did not do so, military operations would continue till such time as all weapons had been recovered. It is well known that guerrilla war is always a long-drawn-out affair. It lasted for about 30 years in Vietnam and we have been embroiled in an insurgency in Nagaland for over 30 years. In Sri Lanka the strength of insurgents and the weapons with them are much more than in Nagaland.

Our insistence on all arms being surrendered before talks with the LTTE is reminiscent of the Allied insistence in World War II on Germany's unconditional surrender before any dialogue could take place. We know too well what that insistence led to. The iron curtain descended on a large part of East Europe, and the Cold War set in. This insistence on unconditional surrender did not serve the West's long-term interests. Similarly we may find that our insistence on the surrender of all weapons with the LTTE before any talks with them may not serve our long-term interests. Wisdom demands that all methods, both political and military, should be tried to bring the LTTE in line with the mainstream so that Tamil autonomy and Sri Lankan sovereignty can both be ensured.

Another point that needs to be considered is the extent to which it may be advisable to crush the ability of Tamil militants to resist any onslaught against them by the Sri Lankan forces after the IPKF's withdrawal. Within the ruling party in Sri Lanka, many including the Prime Minister hold different views on the accord with India Even assuming that the octogenarian Mr Jayewardene can keep these elements under control, one may well ask how long he will be able to do so. And also, what happens when the JVP (the Sinhalese extremists in the south) and the LTTE manage to forge an alliance?

All this only emphasizes the need for the early and successful implementation of the Indo-Sri Lankan accord and the IPKF's pull-out. As things stand, there is little scope for the accord being made to work without the support of the LTTE. Hence the need to bring it in line soon by a combination of both political and military effort.

The saying that it is easier to ride a tiger than dismount from one is more than true regarding our military involvement in Sri Lanka We appear to have hastily signed an accord as part of an image building and vote-catching exercise to make up for the Government's tarnished image in the wake of the Bofors and submarine deals, as also repeated electoral defeats. The accord was even proclaimed as the greatest event of the century. This was an infantile claim. Within weeks it was being called a folly in which our immature leadership had been taken for a ride. No matter what one may feel about this military involvement, the requirement now is to cut our losses, rather than insist on complete military victory at all costs.

Of course official apologists will argue that through the "wisdom and foresight" of the Prime Minister a most dangerous situation was averted. If we had not gone to Sri Lanka, the Pakistanis would have gone there and that would have been very dangerous for us. The question is: can Pakistan pose a serious military threat to us via Sri Lanka? Would the Pakistani general staff forget so soon the lesson of geography it learnt during the 1971 war? Even if Pakistan chose to jump into the fray in Sri Lanka, would Pakistan's involvement in combating insurgency and a bleeding war have really hurt us? In fact, such an involvement would only have weakened Pakistanis' military potential on the main front against us.

Another argument being trotted out is that operations in Sri Lanka will help India to establish hegemony over South Asia and the Indian Ocean. India is bigger in population and resources than all the regional countries put together and does not need to flex her military muscle in this manner. Insofar as the Indian Ocean is concerned, the presence of superpowers makes any talk of Indian hegemonism unrealistic. In any case, gunboat diplomacy has now become out of date and establishing hegemony should hardly be our goal.

No doubt we should be accepted as the major regional power between Suez and Singapore, but this position has to be achieved and retained through domestic stability, economic strength and military power without getting involved in a bush war in a foreign country. It has also been argued that if the USA had got base facilities in the excellent Trincomalee harbour, it would have posed a serious military threat to us. Even without this base the USA is in a position to pose a threat to us, but this is kept in check by the possibility of Soviet retaliation, the likely international reaction and, most important, by domestic opinion within the USA.

An army engaged in fighting insurgency generally is locked in a "no-win" situation. Apart from engaging in hit-and-run actions, the insurgents launch a vicious propaganda effort against the Army focussing attention on genocide, atrocities, rape and so on. This is the stock in trade for fighting an unequal war. The Goebbelsian Big Lie repeated over and over again tends to stick. No army engaged in counter-insurgency operations can hope to come out of one with its reputation untarnished. The Americans discovered this in Vietnam, the Russians in Afghanistan and the British in Ireland. Our own experience in Nagaland and Manipur has not been very different.

We have smashed the LTTE's military resistance in Jaffna where they chose to stand and fight, using the innocent Tamil civilian population as a screen. Our military operations have now entered a new phase of guerrilla war. Any organized military opposition that the LTTE puts up at any place has of course to be liquidated. However, we must never lose sight of the fact that the sooner we pull out from Sri Lanka the better it will be from all points of view—political, military and economic. This goal can be achieved by a more flexible and far-sighted policy than a rigid insistence on no talks before the surrender of all weapons.

THE STATESMAN

BETRAYAL IN SRI LANKA?

Myth Of Devolution

ASHOK MITRA

THOUGH the LTTE is being blamed for the political impasse in Sri Lanka, Ashok Mitra, West Bengal's former Finance Minister, says that "in his exuberance to have an agreement" Mr Rajiv Gandhi let down three million Tamils who had reposed their trust in India. Analysing the July 29 agreement, Sri Lanka's 13th Constitutional Amendment and the Provincial Councils Bill, Mr Mitra concludes that the promised devolution of power is a myth and that the Tamil-majority province will enjoy no autonomy since it will be directly under Colombo's financial control.

DEVELOPMENTS across the Palk Straits continue to cause widespread uneasiness in this country. While disturbances are also taking place in the southern parts of Sri Lanka, it is the impasse in the north and the east that is of major concern here.

Much of the blame for this impasse is being pinned on the organization of Sri Lankan Tamils which the Government of India had patronized until recently, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. It is accused of going back on its commitment not to oppose the implementation of the Indo-Sri Lankan agreement signed on July 29 last between the Indian Prime Minister and the Sri Lankan President. The equivalent of roughly four divisions of the Indian Army are now concentrated in the northern and eastern parts of the island with the object of subduing the LTTE cadres. Our army has met with some success, but, with the Tamils taking recourse to guerrilla warfare, there is little prospect of any early restoration of peace.

Several Indian political parties, while worrying over the way things are going in the island, have castigated the LTTE for having gone back on its pledge. There is of course a technicality involved here: the LTTE might argue that since it was not a signatory to the agreement, it cannot be accused of any breach of commitment; it had merely agreed not to be obstructive as long as Tamil interests were fully protected; subsequent developments convinced it that such was not the case; it had therefore every right to change its mind. If there is any breach of faith, LTTE spokesmen have made the point, it is on the Government of India's part; it has sold Tamil interests down the drain in its anxiety to come to an arrangement with President Jayewardene.

Does the LTTE have a case? It fell back on two principal demands once it became obvious that the grant of "Eelam"—full independence—was not on the cards: (A) the Constitution of an integrated province consisting of the present Eastern and Northern Provinces, where the Tamils would have a clear majority, and (B) a clear-cut devolution of responsibilities and financial powers to the provinces so that the latter would enjoy a reasonable degree of autonomy.

As far as the first stipulation is concerned, the July 29 agreement indicated that an Interim Administrative Council, with jurisdiction over both provinces, would come into existence with immediate effect, but the electorate in the two provinces would have to ratify the unification through a referendum to be organized before the end of 1988. It is over the composition of the Interim Administrative Council—and the choice of the person to preside over it—that the LTTE finally veered away from the path of negotiations and has now taken to guerrilla-type activities.

As regards devolution, the text of the agreement is both vague and terse. It was agreed that "the entries in List II and List III of the Seventh Schedule of the Indian Constitution shall be devolved upon the provincial councils; the details were to be worked out subsequently. The sum and substance of the Government of India's point of view is easily expressed: since Sri Lankan Tamils were being offered a dispensation more or less identical with what is enjoyed by the States in India, the agreement ought to be welcome.

It can of course be argued that the powers enjoyed by the Constituent States in India are not as generous as is being claimed by the Government of India, and the demand for restructuring Centre-State relations, which has gathered force in recent years, is precisely on account of that. But even if that issue is left aside, are we sure that arrangements currently being made in Sri Lanka would actually ensure for the Tamil Province (or provinces) the same prerogatives as are accorded to the States in India?

With the passage of the 13th Amendment to the Sri Lankan Constitution and the Provincial Councils Bill by Parliament in Colombo a fairly clear picture of the proposed devolution has now emerged. The Ninth Schedule of the Provincial Councils Bill enumerates three separate lists, List I is the Provincial List, List II the Central List, while List III is the Concurrent List. These lists do indeed follow the pattern laid down in the Indian Constitution. As in our case, the Concurrent List is a bit of a fake, since the will of the central authority is to prevail over that of the provincial legislature with respect to matters pertaining to items included in this list.

It is, however, the devolution of financial items which is crucial for effective decentralization. The States in India, as is now well recognized, have major grievances against the existing financial arrangements in the Constitution. The matter has been raised from time to time in the National Development Council. It has also been aired before successive Finance Commissions, and must have been a major point of focus in the recently submitted report of the Commission on Centre-State Relations.

But the Provincial Councils Bill passed by the Sri Lankan Parliament intends to pass on to the provinces considerably less financial powers than even what devolves on the constituent States in India. Only in respect of one item, namely, the use of external aid, are Sri Lanka's provinces to have a wider latitude compared to what the States in India enjoy. Unlike in India, where the deployment of foreign loan funds is the exclusive prerogative of the Centre, Section 22 of the Sri Lanka Provincial Councils Bill states that "foreign aid negotiated by the Government for a project in a province should be allocated by the Government to such project or scheme".

In all other fiscal matters, the central authority will call the tune. Public borrowing will remain, as in India, the general preserve of the national admin-

istration; the Bill specifies that the borrowing of money is to take place "to the extent permitted by or under any law made by Parliament." Four-fifths of aggregate public revenue in Sri Lanka, however, comes from taxes. It is the scheme of distribution of taxation powers which reveals that the devolution proposed in Sri Lanka is largely of a symbolic nature, with little of substance in it.

The point is easily proved. There are five principal areas of taxation delineated in the Provincial Councils Bill: (i) the general sales and turnover tax, which is a tax on the turnover of (a) the manufacturing sector, (b) the non-manufacturing sector—that is, trade, industry and professions, (c) imports and (d) wholesale and retail sales; (ii) import duties; (iii) income-tax, including corporate tax; (iv) excise duties on selected items such as liquor, tobacco etc., and finally, (v) taxes on land and buildings, including stamp duty on transfer of property.

The proceeds of all the items under (i) except (i) (a)—the turnover tax on wholesale and retail sales—as well as those from (ii), (iii) and (iv) would, under the Provincial Councils Bill, accrue wholly to the national government. The provinces would have control over only (i) (d) and over the items of taxation listed under (v). There lies the rub. Of the total tax collection in Sri Lanka in 1986, amounting to Rs 3,200 crores, the accretion on account of the items reserved for the provinces was less than Rs 200 crores. This works out to roughly six per cent of the total. In contrast, about 50 per cent of the aggregate tax proceeds in India devolve to the States as per the provisions of the Constitution.

Besides, the Tamil provinces would have to share the proceeds from the items under (i) (d) and (v) with the eight other provinces that are also being established in Sri Lanka in terms of the 13th Amendment to the Constitution. Devolution as such would thus give the Tamil provinces hardly more than two per cent of the total national tax revenue, if even that.

Perhaps the authorities in Sri Lanka are not altogether oblivious of the absurdity of the indicated financial arrangements and the need to allow the provinces a greater share of the nation's over-all financial resources. Section 154 of the amendment to the Constitution passed by Parliament accordingly proposed to establish a permanent Finance Commission which would "allocate to the provinces such additional funds as are adequate for meeting their needs".

The composition of this permanent Finance Commission is, however, rigidly laid down. It would consist of the Governor of the Central Bank, the Secretary to the Treasury (the counterpart of the Secretary to the Union Ministry of Finance in our system), and "three other members to represent the three major communities".

Even a child can perceive that a finance commission, constituted in this manner, would be totally under the influence of the central authority. There is therefore, no doubt that the provinces would have to subsist on the mercy of the national government, and seemingly elaborate powers statutorily granted to them would recede into insignificance, for finances to back up these powers would be denied.

Going purely by the proposed scheme of financial devolution, there is, therefore, a great deal to be said in support of the LTTE's reluctance to embrace the future shaped for the Tamils by the Indian Prime Minister in consultation with the Sri Lankan President. Our Prime Minister's assertion only the other day that "it was for the first time in many centuries that the demands, needs and the rights of the Tamils were about to be recognized and realized" has to be, alas, dismissed as sad hyperbole.

UNNERVING

The matter cannot, however, be allowed simply to rest here. It is somewhat unnerving that the head of our Government took upon himself the onus of signing the Indo-Sri Lankan agreement on behalf of the Tamils when what was promised to them was left undefined and has turned out to be as flimsy as the contents of the 13th Amendment to the Constitution and the Provincial Councils Bill now reveal. Were his advisers that amateurish, or did he, in his exuberance to have an agreement, decide to override what he might have considered as minor details?

It is important that this question be raised and an answer sought, for in attempting to enforce the agreement, our Government has not only bartered away the rights of three million people who had reposed their trust in us; it has also committed our armed forces to the cause, to an extent not yet quite clear, with attendant additional financial and other burdens on the nation. In a democratic system, there must be some accountability for perpetration of follies of this nature.

"This agreement secures everything that the Sri Lankan Tamils have demanded, short of breaking Sri Lanka and infact it goes well beyond the initial demands of the Tamils"

— Rajiv Gandhi

(in a public speech at Madras shortly after the Accord)

Rajiv Gandhi: festive mood

29.12.87

INDIA TODAY

J.R. JAYEWARDENE

INTERVIEW

"India is not our enemy"

SRI Lanka's 81-year-old President, J.R. Jayewardene, has come up the hard way, rising from the post of a municipal corporator to the head of state. Not surprisingly then, he is adept at converting political adversities to his advantage. Till six months ago, Jayewardene was the target of attacks by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), an aggressive opposition and even his own ministers. And when he signed the Indo-Sri Lanka accord on July 29, 1987, he was accused of surrendering Sri Lanka's sovereignty to India.

But the shrewd politician is nobody's fool. He has got the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) to do what the Sri Lankan Army could not accomplish in four years—crush the LTTE. As one prominent minister put it: "JRJ has silenced his critics by involving Rajiv Gandhi in his fight against the terrorists. We have saved money and manpower."

Jayewardene does not try to hide his satisfaction at having got India to do his work for him. At a meeting last fortnight he said: "But for the IPKF we would have had to fight this war and that would have cost in monetary terms." He pointed out that in the last four years, the Sri Lankan Army had lost an average of one soldier a day, but since the IPKF took over, "not a Sinhala, Tamil or Muslim soldier has died. Their place has been taken by the Indians. I want to stop that also."

But some controversial statements made by few Indian Army generals—where they hint at a permanent stay in Sri Lanka—have troubled Jayewardene. As a result of this, he has now adopted a defiant stance on the implementation of the accord, and has started promoting an Indo-Sri Lankan Peace Treaty, with which he hopes to limit India's influence over Sri Lanka. In his first exclusive interview after the commencement of the IPKF operations, Jayewardene spoke to Senior Editor PRABHU CHAWLA at his residence. Excerpts:

Q. *You have been invited as chief guest to India's Republic Day parade. But a section of the Opposition in India has opposed it. How do you react to this?*

A. Rajiv has invited me. Now it seems he will be in difficulty if I come. I will be the last one to embarrass him by coming there. Probably some of them are trying to work out their feelings because I criticised M.G. Ramachandran (Tamil Nadu chief minister) in my press conference in New Delhi. I did not say any untruth.

Q. *Do you have the same opinion about MGR after the IPKF operations?*

A. Now Rajiv has told me that MGR is working with him in the implementation of the accord. If he is working with us and not helping the terrorists, I admire him and I am also grateful to him. My main criticism against MGR was that he was entertaining a self-confessed murderer, Pirabhakaran, who is the LTTE chief. Pirabhakaran openly admitted that he killed the mayor of Jaffna. But I meant only what MGR did in the past.

Q. *Do you think that the Indo-Sri Lanka accord is being implemented successfully?*

A. As far as we are concerned, we have done everything mentioned in the accord. The only thing left is the election in the provinces. We will do this also. I have to pass the law. After that I have to hold elections. But I can do that only when there is peace in the north and the east.

Q. *Till the elections take place, will you revive the proposal of an Interim Administrative Council?*

A. Not necessarily. If I can have elected people then where is the need for an interim council?

Q. *But earlier you had promised to appoint an Interim Council.*

A. These chaps (the LTTE) are not allowing us to do so.

Q. *Can't you nominate representatives of other Tamil groups to the council?*

A. Why should I do that if I can hold elections? I am willing to hold provincial elections in January or February. I want to choose people who I can talk with. How can I talk with these fellows? Who do they represent? If they surrender arms, let them come forward and fight elections.

Q. *So you will not talk to them now.*

A. No. Let them get elected. We will also fight elections as a political party.

Q. *Do you think the LTTE will be finished before the elections?*

A. Yes. As a terrorist force they will be liquidated. They are withering away.

Q. *If the accord is working well, then why do you want a new Indo-Sri Lanka Peace Treaty? Are you under pressure to delete some provisions of the accord?*

A. That treaty is in connection with annexures attached with the accord. If India wants us to do certain things, we also want India to reciprocate by doing something for us. I am not under any pressure. I want to make it reciprocal.

Q. *What are the provisions in the annexures?*

A. Letters exchanged between Rajiv and me deal with the foreign trainers, use of Trincomalee port and the Voice of America broadcasts from Sri Lanka. We want India to assure us that she will not do anything against our interests.

Q. *But what do you want from India?*

A. If India wants anything to do with our harbour, broadcasting corporations and training facilities, I also want the same thing from them.

Q. *Foreign trainers, like Keeney Meeney and some Israeli security advisors, have not been sent back yet, though this was part of the understanding.*

A. They won't go even now. Somebody must train our people here or abroad. We never said that they will go. We only promised that we will consider it.

Q. *If LTTE cadres surrender arms, will you grant them amnesty?*

A. I have already announced that all those who surrender arms and join democratic forces will be let off. Even Pirabhakaran.

Q. *Don't you think that India could train the Sri Lankan Army for you?*

A. India can't train both terrorists and the army. I told Rajiv that. But that is not the situation now. We will consider India's offer of training our forces.

Q. *Rajiv wants your assurance that Trincomalee port will not be used in any*

"If India wants us to do certain things, we also want India to reciprocate.... We want India to assure us that she will not do anything against our interests."

"The IPKF must stay here in Sri Lanka only till the LTTE gives up. They will not be required after that.... They are here for restoring peace."

way against India's security interests. What do you want from Rajiv?

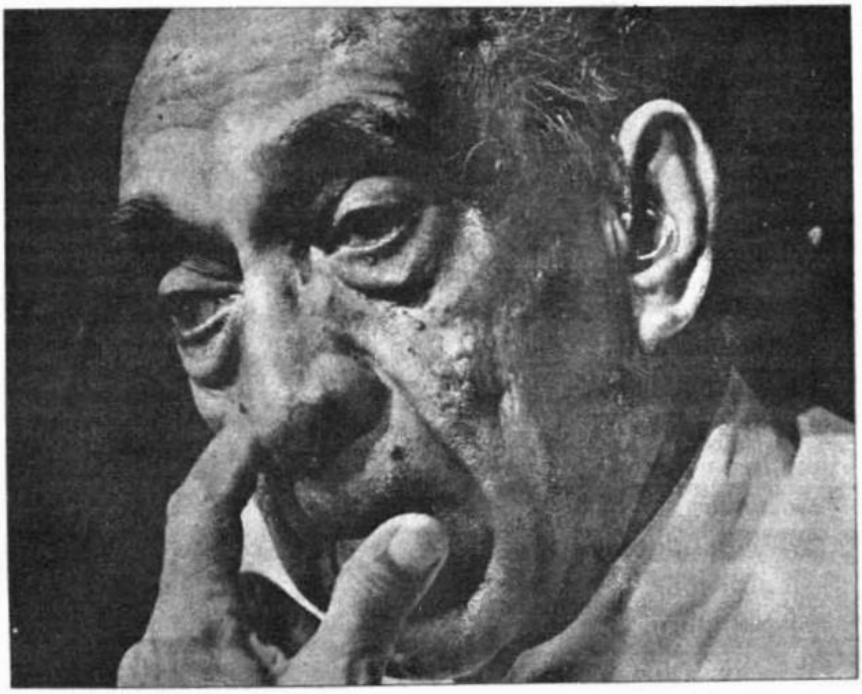
A. We want him to ensure that no harbour in India is used against Sri Lanka. Why should our ports be used against India? She is not our enemy.

Q. ***Are you saying that foreign trainers and other irritants to India will remain in Sri Lanka till a reciprocal arrangement is worked out?***

A. Yes, certainly. We have started discussions and are preparing a draft treaty.

Q. ***Rajiv Gandhi and the IPKF have paid a heavy price in implementing the accord. How do you propose to reciprocate this?***

PRAMOD PUSHKARNA



A. We will fulfil our part of the accord totally. That is the only way.

Q. ***Don't you think that Rajiv Gandhi has suffered a lot in the process?***

A. So have our people. Look at the refugees in Trincomalee. There were none earlier. There are a few thousand now.

Q. ***Have they become refugees after the IPKF operations?***

A. Yes. They are blaming the Indian troops. They are saying that IPKF personnel are the ones who harass them.

Q. ***Do you believe that?***

A. That is another matter. But they are saying that they left their homes due to the Indians only.

Q. ***Do you also believe the rumours that the IPKF will stay for a longer period than you had in mind?***

A. Statements of some of the Indian Army officials have been quoted in Parliament. But they have been refuted. The IPKF must stay here only till the LTTE gives up.

Q. ***Once the LTTE is eliminated and peace is restored, will you ask the IPKF to pack up?***

A. Yes, they will not be required after that.

Q. ***But under the accord, the IPKF has to stay on to ensure implementation of other clauses like holding the elections.***

A. No. They are here for restoring peace. There are different conditions for holding elections.

Q. ***Will you ask India to help you crush Janata Vimukthi Peramuna's (JVP) terrorism in the south?***

A. No. We are capable of handling them. They will be finished in a month.

Q. ***But they accuse the Government of not withdrawing the Prevention of Terrorism Act and arresting innocent people who raise a voice of dissent.***

A. I will withdraw the Act after the violence is over. They are killing elected people. People who take up arms are not entitled to normal laws in any democracy.

Q. ***Has the opposition from within your Government made it difficult for you to handle serious problems decisively?***

A. There is no opposition to me. The party has fully supported the accord. It is due to this that I have been able to implement our side of the accord. Only two members of Parliament opposed it and they have been expelled. Now the prime minister has moved legislation for conducting the elections.

Q. ***Under the accord, you were supposed to release all Tamils in Sri Lankan jails.***

A. I released 3,000 to 4,000 of them and they went and joined the terrorists.

Q. ***Now that the IPKF has been forced to fight the LTTE, where do you think things went wrong?***

A. Nothing went wrong except that they trusted the LTTE too much. The IPKF thought the LTTE cadres would give in. Instead of putting the blame on others, they should completely eliminate those fellows (the LTTE). Because of them, innocent people are dying.

Q. ***Rajiv Gandhi is being accused of doing your dirty work for you.***

A. We are just implementing an accord and nothing else.

Q. ***Why have some clauses like the return of Tamil refugees from Tamil Nadu not been implemented?***

A. I have not stopped any one. They are not returning because they are frightened. Jaffna is in turmoil now. There is also a problem of sending both Sinhalese and Muslim refugees back to the north and the east. They don't trust some members of the IPKF.

Q. ***What exactly do you want from the IPKF?***

A. They should complete their part of the deal. They have not yet taken away arms from the terrorists. They have to disarm the terrorists.

Q. ***The IPKF is killing them instead of disarming them.***

A. But they are not finished yet. Their primary job is to liquidate the terrorists in the north and the east.

Q. ***Do you perceive any role for the IPKF in the reconstruction and rehabilitation of Sri Lanka?***

A. We are capable of doing that ourselves. They can offer us grants.

Q. ***Is the IPKF working under your directions?***

A. Yes, they have to work under my charge. But I don't go into the details of their operations on a daily basis. That is left to their commanders.

Q. ***Do you subscribe to the Opposition belief that the IPKF's presence in Sri Lanka is largely determined by India's designs in the region and that Rajiv Gandhi will not withdraw the IPKF in a hurry?***

A. No. I asked them to come here and I will ask them to go as well.

Q. ***Do you foresee them refusing to leave your country in the near future?***

A. I can't dream of this. I have full trust in Rajiv Gandhi and our ability to look after ourselves.

DECEMBER 31, 1987

CONFRONTATION

1

COLOMBO, Dec 1

Nine soldiers of the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) were killed and five injured during the force's search operations in Sri Lanka's northern Jaffna peninsula in the past 24 hours.

In an incident in Trincomalee district, seven members of a Tamil family were shot dead by unidentified men today.

Five IPKF soldiers were killed and three injured when the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) militants blew up the truck in which they were travelling. The truck hit a landmine at Peyadikoolankulam, 25 km east of the Vavuniya town, in the northern Sri Lankan province last night, sources in Vavuniya said.

There was an exchange of gunfire between the IPKF and the Tamil militants following the landmine blast, but the LTTE casualties, if any, were not immediately known.

In another incident, four IPKF men were killed and two injured when they came under the LTTE's sniper fire in the Pandatarippu town in the Northern province.

About 40 members of the LTTE also attacked the Batticaloa town police station on Monday evening, injuring one Indian soldier and two women. They fired mortars, rocket-propelled grenades and automatic weapons before a joint team of Sri Lankan police and Indian soldiers forced them to retreat five hours later.

"It's the most brazen attack in the town by the Tigers since the Indo-Sri Lanka pact was signed," according to a local resident. The police said the LTTE men fired from a building where the Government's chief administrator holds office and a bus stand, both about 300 metres from their target. Some residents said firing also came from a nearby lagoon. Mortar shells hit a shop, a nursing home and the police quarters where the three casualties were hit, eye-witnesses claimed.

A 36-hour curfew was ordered from 6 a.m. today and some 40 people were detained yesterday by the IPKF for questioning. Some 30 other suspected LTTE men were arrested in the northern Jaffna peninsula.

According to an External Affairs Ministry spokesman, nine IPKF soldiers and six LTTE men were killed in the last 24 hours of IPKF search operations. Five IPKF personnel were also wounded.

According to intelligence reports the LTTE was forcing its wounded cadres to take cyanide pills. The spokesman said many such incidents were being reported by the militants surrendering to the IPKF.

Two Fishermen were shot dead by the IPKF at Batticoloa.

2

NEW DELHI, Dec 2

In a significant development, 82 hardcore members of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, including some senior sector commanders, were apprehended by the Indian Peace Keeping Force in search operations in the Northern and Eastern Provinces of Sri Lanka in the last 48 hours.

An External Affairs Ministry spokesman said here today that the LTTE militants offered virtually little or no resistance and later questioning revealed that 'the bulk of them were waiting to surrender. Some of them had weapons and others had thrown away their arms at the time of capture.

The spokesman said although the militants were apprehended the IPKF had agreed to extend the package of facilities offered to those who surrendered. They have been promised full safety and security, food, stipend, and training or education to enable them to join the mainstream of political life in Sri Lanka as law abiding citizens. In all 108 LTTE members, including the hardcore cadres, have given themselves up.

Senior militants

Among the senior LTTE militants now in the custody of the IPKF are Nandakumar alias Selvan responsible for LTTE operations in Jaffna and Nandan, who were captured around the Nallur Kandasamy temple. Two senior leaders, Manmadan and Ramesh Kumar were apprehended in Achchuveli yesterday. Manmadan was in charge of the LTTE operations in the Jaffna peninsula, including its communications network. He was one of the few sector commanders reporting directly to the LTTE deputy leader, Mr. Ajit Mahatiya.

The spokesman said the reason for 'the first ever' mass surrender of the LTTE cadres was the rehabilitation package announced by the IPKF recently. Also, the "cyanide pill treatment' being given to wounded cadres had convinced them of the futility of the armed conflict with the IPKF.

Grenade attack

Intelligence reports had revealed that there was a growing feeling among a section of the LTTE leadership that the "armed struggle was being conducted for the personal glorification" of individual leaders. This had also been confirmed in the testimony of the LTTE militants who had surrendered, the spokesman said.

However, the LTTE had continued acts of intimidation of the local populace. In the second incident of its kind since the IPKF operations began, two hand grenades were lobbed at Tamil civilians collecting rations at Kottadi, near Navatkuli at 9 a.m. yesterday. Unlike the Chavakacheri incident of November 29 when five civilians lost their lives, no casualties had been reported in this incident. "This act would indicate the growing desperation of the LTTE leadership and the continued intimidation of the local people, who are increasingly cooperating with the IPKF," the spokesman said.

As part of its relief activities, the IPKF provided assistance for the conduct of examinations in the Vidyalika Mahavidyala in Trincomalee. Medical help was being provided to all the hospitals in Jaffna town.

In the last 24 hours, the IPKF has lost one soldier and one has been wounded while four LTTE members were killed. In search operations the IPKF seized large quantities of hand grenades, Claymore mines, remote controlled devices, and 4,320 rounds of ammunition. At Mannar, a naval unit of the IPKF captured a boat with four LTTE cadres and 1,600 detonators.

3

It was reported that Indian troops halted a bus and shot dead 11 passengers while other troops attacked a village and killed at least 21 residents in Batticaloa (*3 Dec.*). FAR EASTERN ECONOMIC REVIEW • 17 DECEMBER 1987

Colombo, Dec. 3 (UNI): At least 43 people, including nine Indian Peace-Keeping Force (IPKF) personnel and about ten Tamil militants, were killed and 31 injured in an ambush and exchange of fire in Sri Lanka's eastern Batticaloa district on Wednesday informed sources here said today.

The sources said the incident occurred at Ottamawadi, near Valachenai, about 35 km north of Batticaloa town.

An IPKF convoy, returning to Batticaloa after distributing food to their units in the Valachenai area, was ambushed by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) using mortar, grenades and small arms fire from the front and rear of the convoy.

Sources said nine IPKF men, including a major, were killed and ten injured in the ambush. Earlier reports that the dead officer was a colonel was incorrect, they said.

At least ten militants and 24 civilians, including women and children, were killed and 21 injured when the IPKF directed fire at houses from where the LTTE men were firing at them. The battle reportedly continued for over two hours.

Meanwhile, an Indian High Commission spokesman denied the allegation of a Muslim MP from Batticaloa, Mr. Razwi Sinna Lebbe, that 25 Muslims were killed and 200 injured when the IPKF shelled Ottamawadi village following the ambush.

The spokesman said it was possible that "there or four" civilians died in the exchange of fire between the two sides. He said the IPKF was investigating the incident.

People living in villages around the army camps at Mullaitivu have been asked to move out immediately, from yesterday by the IPKF. There was indiscriminate shelling from the Oddusuddan camp between 05.00 hrs and 09.00 hrs yesterday. People have started fleeing into the jungle.

IPKF have looted houses and shops in Mulliyawalai Thaneerootru and Watrapalai in the Mullaitivu district.

The IPKF has destroyed equipments in the Mullaitivu, Mulliyawalai and Puthukudyiruppu government hospital. The people of the Mullaitivu district are suffering without medical facilities. Upto date 7 people have died due to brain fever.

A youth admitted to Mullaitivu hospital with snake bite injury was taken away the IPKF and shot.

2 women were raped in Araiyampathy and Punnanai in the Batticoloa district.

6 civilians were shot dead yesterday by the IPKF at Kiyavedduvan in Batticoloa yesterday.

41 civilians including more than 25 Tamil speaking muslims were shot dead and more than 50 were injured when the IPKF opened fire at Oddamavady in Batticoloa. They also burnt 8 shops.

The Oddamavady bazaar was also burnt.

4 civilians were shot dead by the IPKF at Kallady, Batticaloa.

The IPKF stopped a bus coming from Colombo to Batticoloa at KIRAN at 06.30 hrs and ordered 15 passengers to get down at shot them. 12 people were killed and 3 were injured.

At Kiyavedduvan on 3.12.87 in Batticoloa 6 civilians killed by IPKF.

At Kiran, a civilian bus going from Colombo to Batticoloa stopped by the IPKF.

4

Four women including 3 Tamil speaking Muslim women were raped by the IPKF at Kallady in Batticoloa. One of the Muslim girls committed suicide later.

The IPKF opened fire near petrol shed at Oddamavady in Batticoloa. 3 people were killed and one was injured.

One Mohan was killed due to the indiscriminate shelling by the IPKF at Kallapady Model village at 09.30 hrs.

5

COLOMBO, Dec. 5.

At least seven persons were reported killed today in attacks allegedly by the LTTE.

The militants raided a farm in Mankulam village in Vavunia district and shot dead five members of the rival Eelam National Democratic Liberation Front, official sources said.

The sources said two people were also killed and four wounded in Killinochchi in Vavunia when the Tigers attacked a college building, which had been turned into a refugee camp.

All the seven killed were Tamils, sources said. — AP

COLOMBO, Dec. 5.

The acting Indian High Commissioner of India to Sri Lanka, Mr. Nirupam Sen, explaining the circumstances under which nine members of the IPKF were killed and 10 others injured, said today that the LTTE attacked the IPKF first with mortars and automatic weapons from entrenched positions in houses at Ottamawadi in Batticaloa district on Wednesday.

During a meeting here yesterday with the Sri Lankan Foreign Minister, Mr. A. C. S. Hameed, which was also attended by the Defence Service Adviser to the Indian Mission, Capt. B. K. Gupta, and the Secretary, Sri Lankan Ministry of Defence, Gen. D. S. Attygalle, Mr. Sen made it clear that there were no incidents of arson, looting or damage to any mosque.

Victims of cross-fire: The acting High Commissioner, according to the release, had said that the IPKF had to neutralise the firing from the village and in the cross-fire, 25 persons were killed, 21 others injured and 18 houses damaged.

(Operation Pawan)

CIVILIANS □ KILLED

URUMPIRAI

Nirmala Alagammah	Kanthan Vai
S. Navaratnam	Nallammah Rasiah
K. Srinivasan	K. Appathurai
M. Ehamparam	**Varaledchumy**
E. Dorothy	**S. Komathy**
G. Kirishanthi	**S. Girija**
M. Sivakolunthu	S. Kiritharan
V. Vijayasingam	S. Jeyatharan
Kunchan Muthu	S. Uthayatharan
K. Susiladevi	**Annammah**
A. Mathiaparanam	S. Sabaratnam
Puthiyan Kasiyan	**S. Pakiam**
S. Dharmavathy	Sangarapillai
N. Ponnammah	N. Sivalingarasa
S. Markandu	Arulanantham
Kanthan Ratnam	Rajappah
S. Sellathurai	T. Santhakumar
M. Vigneswaran	K. Thilainadarajah
Oathan Kandiah	**R. Nallammah**
A. Markandu	S. Kandiah
Manuel James	P. Arooran
Subathirai Som	A. Amirtharaja
T. Gunapalasingam	T. Thangaraja
T. Somalingam	E. Sivaraja
L. Somalingam	S. Mohan
S. Poomaratnam	K. Sellappah
P. Rasammah	**V. Virhalaranee**
Leelavathy	S. Thaasan
P. Dharmachandran	**Sahathevan**
Dushantini	S. Nageswaran
Ambika	S. Vanajan
Rasathura	**S. Meenalogini**
Poothar Kanagu	R. Tharmakulathasan
V. Manmatharasa	N. Kathiresu

These are the names of the Tamil speaking Muslims killed by the IPKF at Siaweduwan. Some were shot dead inside the Mosque.

Noor Mohamed Mohamed Ismail	M (55)
Ahamed Lebbey Shaul Hameed	M (14)
Shaul Hameed Mahoonbiva	F (14)
Shaul Hameed Hithaya	F (07)
Shaul Hameed Najeem	M (1 1/2)
Aliyar Raheem Umma	F (35)
Mustapa Lebbey Nusrath Riswin	F (13)
Uduman Lebbey Amanullah	M (13)
Hareem Lebbey Salaika Ummah	F (45)
Mohamed Abdul Quathir Mohameed Ismail	M (37)
Casim Daba Refeek	M (04)
Adak Mohamed Meera Sahiboo	M (35)
Noordeen Asalam	M (35)

Premavathy (16) and Hameed Sadd (60) were shot dead at PIRANTHARA CHENIA in VALAICHENAI by the IPKF.

The business establishments of the following Tamil speaking Muslims were destroyed by the IPKF at Kilaveddu-wan in Batticolao.

K.M. Ibrahim	4 shops burnt
H.L. Adam Baba	2 shops burnt
Meera Saiboo Adam Bawa	Tea shop
A. Adam Bawa	Tea shop
M. Mohamed Saiboo	Ice Factory
M. Adam Bawa	Tyre Shop
H.M. Ahamed	Tailor Shop
Umaroon Lebbey	Groceries
M.L. Buhari	Timber Depot
A.M. Buhari	Betel (Pan) Shop

Valaichenai Kuran School was also burnt by the IPKF.

6

Colombo, Dec. 6 (PTI): Seven people, including five members of a rival Tamil militant group, were killed by the LTTE and at least 25 Tamil tigers were arrested in north Sri Lanka, published reports and the State news agency reported on Sunday.

The five militants were killed when LTTE cadres attacked rival Eelam National Democratic Liberation Front (ENDLF) members with grenades and small arms at Mankulam in Vavuniya early on Saturday, State-owned '*Sunday Observer*', quoting a security forces spokesman, said.

Some LTTE men opened fire at a school, 'Madhya Maha Vidyalaya', in Killinochchi on Saturday morning to disrupt an examination being held there, the *Observer* said.

It said a burst from an automatic weapon fired at the school hit the inmates of a refugee camp adjoining the school.

The national news agency Lankapuvath reported today that during the Indian Peace Keeping Force operations, at least 25 persons were captured and 15,000 rounds of ammunition seized at Urumpirai, Kopay and Kondavil near Jaffna town during the last 48 hours.

Four civilians killed in Kalliwanchikuddy and Vandarumoolai in Batticaloa due to aerial bombardment.

An old man was shot dead by the IPKF near their camp at the 5th Mile post, Araiyampathy in Batticoloa.

8

New Delhi, Dec. 8 (UNI): About 50 boats carrying LTTE personnel have been destroyed or captured during joint patrolling by the Indian and Sri Lankan navies in the Palk Straits and off the Lankan east coast.

A naval spokesman here said the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam was reeling under the near total naval blockade by the naval ships, aircraft, helicopters and commandos on the northern and eastern coasts of the island.

He said naval ships were maintaining continuous surveillance over a length of 450 km in the Palk Bay and the Lankan east coast with a clear mandate to use necessary force when required.

Colombo, Dec. 8 (PTI): The leaders of the militant People's Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam (PLOTE) and an associate were killed in a major battle with LTTE men in north Sri Lanka, official sources said here today.

9

COLOMBO, Dec. 9.

At least eight Indian soldiers and three LTTE persons were killed during the past 72 hours in Jaffna peninsula and the north-western district of Mullaitivu in different incidents, as the IPKF continued its search operations recovering substantial quantity of explosives from the fleeing LTTE cadres, authoritative reports said today.

Six IPKF personnel were killed on Sunday at Karachi, Kudirupu in Mullaitivu district, when a mortar launcher they were using in a confrontation with the LTTE "terrorists" allegedly backfired, the English daily *Sun* reported quoting sources.

A senior official of the Indian High Commission, when asked about the incident, said "these things happen at times during operation". He, however, could not immediately confirm the number of casualties.

Three LTTE persons and two members of the IPKF were left dead yesterday in two separate engagements at Kondavil in Jaffna peninsula, the national news agency "Lankapuvath" reported quoting official sources.

In one encounter, the three LTTE cadres were killed and four other militants wouned, while one Indian soldier also lost his life.

In another engagement at Kondavil North, one Indian soldier was killed and another injured.

The Indian High Commission official said that they had information till now about the death of one IPKF man and injury to another at Kondavil yesterday. It might be that another soldier was also killed, he added.

Lankapuvath also reported that two camouflaged trucks and tractors moving along the coastal route in eastern Sri Lanka were destroyed yesterday by naval patrol boats firing from ship to shore.

According to the news agency, one civilian was killed in crossfire when the Sri Lankan security forces repulsed an attack by the LTTE elements at Akkaraipattu in eastern Batticaloa district yesterday.

The LTTE "terrorists" also fired at a police patrol at Srunutara in eastern Trincomalee district yesterday. The police countered the attack and one civilian was wounded in the crossfire.

At Sammanthurai, in Baticaloa district, a bakery manager was gunned down yesterday by a "gang of LTTE terrorists", the news agency added.

Continuous curfew in Vadamarachy from the 5th to the 7th.

3 civilians who had participated in the fast to death campaign supporting Thilagam were arrested by the IPKF at Point Pedro.

17 civilians were shot dead at Kondavil by the IPKF.

10

Four policemen were injured when their jeep exploded after hitting a landmine planted by the LTTE at Walathapitiya in Eastern Amparai district today. All the injured have been removed to hospital.

11

COLOMBO, Dec. 11.

Sixteen Tamil militants were killed and scores wounded seriously in fighting between the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam and the rival Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation, it was reported here today. Government sources in Colombo said the clashes took place in Vavuniya, northern Sri Lanka.

The sources said TELO militants killed 15 LTTE men when they raided a hideout in Vappamkulam in the Vavuniya district last night. One TELO member was killed and there were many injured on both sides.

The fighting continued today and the militants were reportedly using heavy artillery and rocket launchers, the sources said. Before the latest clashes, the LTTE had killed three TELO members close to Vavuniya and three members of the rival Peoples Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam (PLOT).

Many houses were burnt by the IPKF at Pallakaduvettai in Vallaicherai. Karaitivukanaki Amman Temple damaged by the Sri Lankan Police Commandos.

2 people shot dead by the IPKF at Katupulam in Thondamannar.

15 civilians were killed by the IPKF Thivukallai in the Amparai District.

20 females were raped by the IPKF at Manipay yesterday.

13

PLOT man killed: The LTTE men killed a member of the People's Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam (PLOT) on Saturday after pulling him from a bus, residents in the area said. The LTTE also lost one of its men in a reprisal attack.

A 10-year-old boy was cut down in crossfire between the LTTE and the Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation (TELO) in Vavuniya district on Friday. The LTTE spokesman said one TELO fighter had been killed in Friday's fighting and denied reports that his group had suffered any dead.

14

COLOMBO, Dec. 14.

At least 10 Tamil militants died in battles between rebel groups today in northern Sri Lanka, Sri Lankan military officials said.

The officials said LTTE men detonated explosives under an Indian military convoy last night in eastern Sri Lanka resulting in one soldier dead and wounding nine others, besides destroying a jeep. It occurred near Tirukkovil, 60 km south of Batticaloa.

Fighting between LTTE men and the other Tamil groups began yesterday near Mannar. It continued today, the officials said.

The independent *Sun* newspaper said 25 persons were killed in the fighting, but military officials could only confirm ten deaths.

Colombo, Dec. 14 (UNI): One Indian jawan was killed and eight wounded when Liberation Tigers (LTTE) ambushed a foot patrol with a cylinder mine at Akkaraipattu in Lanka's Amparai district on Sunday night, authoritative sources said here on Monday.

Four civilian died due to indiscriminate firing by the IPKF at Eravur.

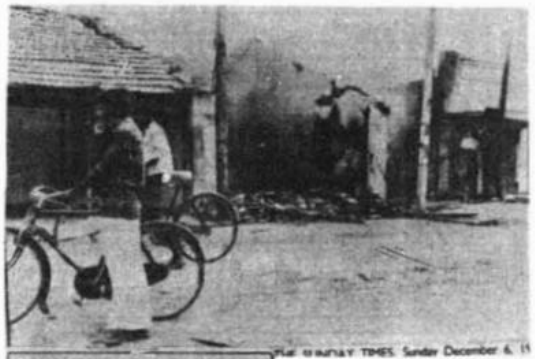
16

COLOMBO, Dec. 16.

At least 22 people, including seven LTTE cadres, and five Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) soldiers were killed when Tamil militants attacked two villages and ambushed an IPKF patrol in Sri Lanka's North and East overnight, authoritative sources here said today. However, Reuter put the toll at 33.

They said about 30 men of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam attacked two adjoining villages — Sungavila and Devalagodalla on the Trincomalee-Polonnaruwa districts' border in the Eastern Province, killing eight, seven Sinhalese and one Muslim.

The sources said the militants first attacked a Muslim's house at Sungavila and shot him dead when he fired at them with a shotgun. After looting cash and jewellery from the house, they attacked Devalagodalla village, a Buddhist pilgrim centre and shot dead seven persons, including the caretaker of a Buddhist temple. Two women and two children were among those killed. The militants were believed to have come from Muttur in Trincomalee district.



Pic: SUNDAY TIMES, Sunday December 6, 19

Wednesday's tragedy at Valaichenai

(Operation Pawan)

CIVILIANS □ KILLED

URUMPIRAI	
Joseph Newton	P. Mahesan
R. Ganesh	Manickam Sathialingam
A. Manoharan	**VARANI**
V. Sinnavan	V. Sasikaran
S. Yoganathan	Nagan Thavarajah
S. Vallikandan	T. Jeyaratnam
K. Balasivam	**VANNARPANNAI**
S. Ratnam	K. Thangarasa
T. Jeevaratnam	T. Nadarajah
R. Kailanathan	S. Rajeevan
N. Sachithananthan	K. Sivalingam
Sithampari	N. Navanesalingam
S. Lankanathan	P. Nageswary
S. Kavitha	P. Selvaratnam
S. Mahatheva	K. Thanaludchumy
P. Kanthiah	S. Nageswary
P. Nagamuthu	S. Nagammah
S. Pathmanathan	R. Annaludchumy
R. Arumugam	I. Subramaniam
A. Soosimani	**URELU**
V. Sinnavan	S. Kandimathy
K. Murugan	M. Karuppi
T. Kathiry	M.Tharmabalasingam
K. Shanmugam	Parameswary
S. Ratnapal	Kamaleswary
V. Kandiah	Sinthiya
V. Visvapillai	P. Kavitha
A. Annaledchumy	Manicham Ponni
M. Vairavi	M. Kandiah
M. Kanesn	M. Sivanes
VASAVILAN	A. Logeswaran
I.S. Sundarampillai	R. Lalitha
S. Sivapalkiam	S. Thangammah
S. Srikaran	S. Yoganathan

Ambush: Five IPKF men were killed and six wounded when the militants ambushed an IPKF patrol with a landmine at Mullaivali in the north-eastern Mullaitivu district, according to the sources They also said seven LTTE men were killed in the exchange of fire between the two sides.

17

COLOMBO, Dec. 17.

Four Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) personnel were killed and one was injured when Tamil militants blew up their vehicle with a landmine in the northern Killinochchi district today. According to informed sources here, the incident occurred south of Murukandy junction.

Meanwhile, the IPKF had arrested 13 LTTE men in the eastern Batticaloa sector during the last 24 hours.

The sources said the LTTE, which had already been pushed out of the Jaffna peninsula, was under pressure from the IPKF in the rest of the Northern Province and the East.

The recovery of large quantities of arms from hideouts in Jaffna peninsula during the last few days was an indication that the IPKF operations to disarm the militants would soon near completion. All the recoveries were made following information provided by the public, the sources said.

Reports from the eastern Batticaloa town said an attack by the militants on the local police station last night was repulsed by the IPKF and the police.

Batticaloa residents also reported a confrontation between the police and the militants near the Kallady bridge this afternoon. No details were available.

Denied: The Indian High Commission today denied a report in the Government-controlled *Daily News*, quoting official sources, that 20 civilians had been killed in an exchange of fire between the IPKF and the LTTE at Mullaitivu on Tuesday.

The spokesman said both the Sri Lankan Joint Operations Command and the Defence Ministry had said that they were not aware of any civilian casualties in the incident, in which five IPKF soldiers and six LTTE men were killed — UNI

18

TELO man killed: A TELO leader, Kandeepan was killed by the LTTE, after being pulled out of a vehicle in Mannar on Saturday last, according to sources in Madras.

In Trincomalee, 15 ENDLF men were arrested by IPKF for indulging in lawless acts including robbery. Local residents had complained to Indian authorities leading to the arrests.

19

A former president of a citizens' committee in Eastern Batticaloa district, a gram sevaka of Ambalanthurai in the same district, and an IPKF personnel were reported to have been killed on Friday by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

Mr. Sugathadasan and Mr. Sundaranayagam were shot dead for allegedly providing information about the movements of the LTTE to the IPKF, authoritative reports reaching here from the Eastern province said today. The two men were dragged out of their homes and shot dead near a school, it was learnt.

In another incident, an IPKF soldier was killed and another wounded in a landmine explosion at Mallakam

20

NEW DELHI, Dec. 20.

Two militants belonging to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) were killed and five injured yesterday in a fierce fight with the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) at Cuttumalai in Sri Lanka's Northern province, an official spokesman said here today.

He said the injured threw away their weapons and escaped, indicating that the morale of the LTTE cadres was low. The IPKF seized four AK-47 rifles, two M-16 rifles, one G-3 rifle, 1,421 rounds of ammunition and 13 hand grenades.

The spokesman said 33 LTTE personnel were apprehended in the last 24 hours in the northern province and two LTTE cadres, including one woman, surrendered.

21

NEW DELHI, Dec. 21.

Thirteen LTTE militants and two Indian soldiers were killed in intensive combing operations launched by the Indian Peace-Keeping Force in Sri Lanka's Jaffna Peninsula durinfg the past 24 hours, reports from Colombo said.

According to official reports received here today, the militants killed five civilians, including two women, following their refusal to lend assistance.

Fierce fighting was on at Urelu (north of Urumpirai) following detection of a group of 30 to 40 LTTE militants operating in the area.

Thirteen militants were killed and two injured in the operations. Seven AK-47 rifles, one G-3 rifle and four other rifles along with a carbine and some ammunition were recovered in the area. Nineteen were apprehended.

At Nunavil 8 IPKF personnel were caught in landmines set by the LTTE and lost lives.

23

NEW DELHI, Dec. 23.

In a major clash, 10 militants belonging to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) were killed and two wounded during search operations in the Urumparai area in the past 24 hours. Giving this information the Foreign Office spokesman said here today that there were no Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) casualties in this incident.

An IPKF patrol was ambushed in Chavakachcheri resulting in three IPKF jawans being killed and four wounded. The IPKF has been patrolling the area intensively in the past week following the discovery there of one of the largest LTTE ammunition dumps in the Jaffna peninsula.

In two other incidents — in Arukulam and in an area north of Kokuvil — the LTTE lost three militants in exchanges with the IPKF.

24

A LTTE Cadre Vikki died in round up by IPKF and 13 of LTTE Cadres also attained Martyrdom in the roundup at Urelivil. Ten LTTE Cadres including Murali and Gandhi were shot dead in an IPKF roundup at Urumpirary Selvapuram. Among them 5 were women fighters. 5 Srilankan soldiers were killed in a shell-attack by LTTE at Kumpirupitti, Trinacomalee

25

Three IPKF personnel were killed and 6 wounded in an attack by LTTE at Thirukkunamadu.

26

New Delhi, Dec. 26 (UNI): Six Indian Peace-Keeping Force (IPKF) personnel were killed and eight injured when the Liberation Tigers of Eelam (LTTE) fired mortar bomb at an IPKF post north of Trincomalee last evening.

One LTTE man was killed and 27 members were apprehended or made to surrender during the IPKF operation in the North and Eastern Provinces in the past 24 hours, official sources said today.

The IPKF seized huge cache of arms and ammunition during the 'cordon and search' operation at various places in Jaffna Province.

A naval helicopter attacked and destroyed a suspiciously moving speed boat off Baticaloa on Monday last. Five men were on board.

The IPKF shot dead 4 Civilians at Mavadi Vembu, Vandarumoolai of Batticoloa.

27

COLOMBO, Dec. 27.

At least 26 people including a police official were killed and more than 20 wounded during a shoot-out in the main market area of Batticaloa town in eastern Sri Lanka today, residents and authoritative sources said.

The shoot-out which lasted more than an hour, from 0915 hours, came after suspected members of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam fired on a group of Sri Lankan policemen who were shopping in the busy Sunday Bazar area, killing one police official and injuring two.

The injured policemen were flown to Colombo for treatment.

Sources close to the Batticaloa Citizens' Committee said that after the incident there was shooting all around.

Cyclists were asked to alight and shot at point blank range. People scurried for cover from the blazing guns of the security personnel. But many were shot on the run, their bodies slumping to the road, residents alleged.

According to residents, the Sri Lankan policemen were mainly responsible for the "indiscriminate" shootout after gunmen killed the policeman.

Rifle snatched

The residents said a group of militants, believed to be LTTE members, fired at three policemen buying fish in the market killing one of them and injuring the other two. They then snatched the rifle which one of the policemen was carrying and escaped in a waiting car.

Following the incident, a large number of enraged policemen rushed out from the police station, separated from the market by only a boundary wall, and allegedly opened fire on the people. A number of shops were set on fire and at least eight people were trapped in the burning shops.

At least 15 shops were gutted. Another version had it that some electric wires got snapped during the shoot-out and fire broke out due to short-circuit.

According to the residents, some people were shot more than a quarter of a mile away from the market area.

Continuous firing

The Roman Catholic Bishop's house near the market was damaged in the firing. A priest at the bishop's residence said continuous firing was heard from the police station for three hours until noon local time today, suggesting that the militants may have launched an attack on the police station after ambushing the policemen. (Some reports said the militants attacked the Aranthalawa police station on the Batticaloa-Amparai border later in the day. Details were not available.)

The priest said people stayed indoors and shops closed as the latest violence broke out

A church spokesman said windows of a house where priests lived was damaged, as were some shops. Residents on the other side of a lagoon that divides the shopping area were stranded, he said.

"They are hiding inside houses... unable to get on to deserted streets.

A church official said people were dragged out of shops in the market square and shot by the police. "There are at least six bodies lying on the deserted streets," he said.

Hospital sources said three of the dead were children under 14.

According to authoritative sources, 19 bodies were brought to Batticaloa hospital and there might be nine or 10 more in different parts of the bazar area. More than 18 injured were taken to the Batticaloa hospital. Nine of the injured are said to be in a serious condition.

The official Lankapuvath news agency however, said 18 persons including one policeman were killed. Quoting official sources, it said 17 civilians were caught in the "crossfire"

The sources, according to Lankapuvath, said that following the attack by the LTTE, the Sri Lankan police and the Indian Peace-Keeping Force had retaliated and fired "back at the terrorists."

(Operation Pawan)

CIVILIANS □ KILLED

URELU

Y. Thushiyanthan	T. Mahendran
N. Kamaladevi	K. Thavarajah
S. Nadarajah	M. Suntharam
M. Mathivathani	R. Rassanayakamah
A. Luxmy	K. Vasanthan
T. Ethiramanosingam	P. Rajeswaran
M. Vamadevi	K. Sritharan
T. Saraswathy	Ellayan Ramu
S. Rajalingam	A. Yogeswaran
S. Thaiyalmuthu	

UDUVIL

V. Maiyvaganam	K. Kumarasamy
V. Anpalakan	Christy Ronald
A. Balasubramanium	Danial Joseph
S. Ariyanayagam	P. Gnanakily
Kasi Valliammai	V.Balasingam
B. Nirmaladevi	A. Jasintha
P. Tharmanayagam	T. Jesaratnam
T. Prabhakaran	Christy Ronald
K. Santhakumar	V. Balasingam
M. Sinniah	D. Joseph
K. Puvanendran	T. Jeyaratnam
S. Pooranam	Jacintha Asservathan
Kandiah	P. Gnanakili
S. Sinnammah	N. THambipillai
S. Vaithiyalingam	M. Arumalingam
K. Suppiah	T. Nanthakopalan
N. Sinnathangam	Vallipuram Sababathy
K. Kannammah	S. Sivakumar
S. Vaithiyalingam	K. Kumarasamy
K. Suppiah	Nagamuthu Manikan
N. Sinnathamby	A. Balasubramaniam
V. Naliammah	K. Varatharajah
K. Sriskandarajah	K.Gopalapillai
N. Seethevi	K. Kumarasamy

NEW DELHI, Dec. 27.

One of the largest underground arms dump of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam was discovered by the Indian Peace-Keeping Force in Manipai in the Northern Province of Sri Lanka in the last 24 hours. According to an official spokesman, a total of six rifles, 11,561 rounds of small arms ammunition, 416 bombs, 497 grenades, 400 kg of explosives, seven mines and two radio sets were recovered from the dump. Underground caches have also been discovered at Navali and Arunakal in the Jaffna peninsula.

The IPKF has of late been discovering a large number of secret arms and ammunition dumps of the LTTE in the Northern Province due to the increasing cooperation of the local populace.

Thirteen LTTE cadres, including a self-styled captain have been killed in clashes between the IPKF and the LTTE. A total of 105 LTTE militants have been apprehended in search and cordon operations in the Northern Province.

In the Vavunia sector of the Eastern Province, a member of the People's Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam was captured with his rifle while in the Batticaloa sector ships of the Eastern Naval Command engaged two boats off the coast. One boat carrying arms was sunk and 12 LTTE cadres killed. Three militants were apprehended.

The spokesman clarified yesterday's report which said that six IPKF soldiers were killed in a mortar attack by the LTTE on December 24. According to detailed information available only one IPKF jawan was killed in that incident.

PTI reports:

In Koddikamam area, an LTTE "Captain" Karunakam was killed in a clash with the IPKF and two LTTE cadres were apprehended.

Two persons were killed in crossfire during two encounters between the IPKF and the LTTE at Kattankudy and Ottamawadi in Batticaloa district yesterday, Lankapuvath said in Colombo, quoting official sources.

In another incident, a reserve police constable was stabbed to death late last night outside a restaurant at Nugegoda on the outskirts of Colombo, according to police.

Bandara's bodyguard (O.I.C.) was shot dead by LTTE at Batticoloa Town. In retaliation Srilankan soldiers wantonly killed 18 Civilians and wounded 13. Many among them were women and children. 12 muslim fishermen were killed by Indian Helicopter attack at Mankeni.

28

At Chenkalady one innocent youth was killed by IPKF.

29

In a shell attack by IPKF on Chenkalady Hospital, three Civilians, including one old man and a boy were killed.

30

Nine Muslims killed: Tamil militants kidnapped nine men in a Muslim-dominated village today and left their bullet-riddled bodies nearby in revenge for the deaths of six Tamils, a military official said.

At least 15 persons died in fighting between Muslims and Tamils in eastern Sri Lanka in 48 hours, the official said.

"A shadowy Muslim movement calling themselves Jihad (Holy War) has killed six known members of the Tamil Tigers during the past two days" said the official, who could not be identified under briefing rules.

He said the six LTTE men were killed near Batticaloa, 230 km northeast of Colombo. The LTTE men on Wednesday raided Kathankudi village, 5 km south of Batticaloa, in retaliation and kidnapped nine men, the official said. Their bodies were found later.

A spokesman of the External Affairs Ministry said that the Tamil "tigers" had been trying to smuggle the arms in the eastern province along the coastline between Trincomalee and Batticaloa. The helicopters operating from the Navy frigate 'Nilgiri' spotted them and took prompt action.

The spokesman said that on Tuesday two boats trying to smuggle arms were located from a helicopter.

At Batticoloa one LTTE Cadre and an Islamic Tamil Youth were killed by Homeguards. This Homeguards setup, 'Jihad' is financed by Sri Lankan Gov-rnment. In reliatory attacks, the LTTE Killed 30 'Jihad' personnel at Kathankudy.

31

COLOMBO, Dec. 31.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam today claimed to have killed 30 members of Muslim fundamentalist group "Jehad" at Kattankudy near Sri Lanka's eastern Batticaloa town.

An LTTE spokesperson told journalists in Batticaloa that they had captured 20 members of the "Jehad" and were questioning them about the killing of an LTTE member "Nazir", on Tuesday night.

However, the Batticaloa police said they had received reports of only five persons — three Tamils and two Muslims — being killed in ttankudy.

Aircraft attacked: The LTTE militants today dramatically directed rocket-propelled grenade at a Sri Lanka Air Force avro-748 while it was landing at the eastern Batticaloa airport on its routine flight from Colombo, according to official sources. The aircraft was slightly damaged, Lanka Puvath said.

The security forces, according to the news agency, took up positions and in a retaliatory fire, forced to the militants to withdraw.

Four LTTE boats capsize: Four boats belonging to the LTTE capsized this evening off Kathankudy in the eastern Batticaloa district when IPKF helicopters strafed them, sources said. It was not immediately known how many people were aboard the sunken vessels.

A Sri Lankan Air Force Plane was attacked by LTTE at Batticoloa. Lt. Visu op LTTE attained Martyrdom in the retaliatory fire by another Sri Lankan plane in the same place.

Dhanabal of LTTE was killed and Gadafi wounded in an ambush by IPKF at Kathankudi.

6 IPKF personnel were killed in a land attack by LTTE at 9th mile post hear Mankulam. An Indian Army Truck was completly destroyed.

வீர வணக்கம்

LTTE MARTYRS

Rohan 1.12.87	Thanthom 12.12.87
2nd Lt. Raji 2.12.87	Capt. Gandhi 23.12.87
Vellai 6.12.87	Nidhi 23.12.87
Thiruchelvam 15.12.87	Cheran 24.12.87
Capt. Vikram 16.12.87	Mari 29.12.87
Shakila 20.12.87	Jayacha 1.12.87
Pawan 20.12.87	Sivakumar 22.12.87
Sudhu 24.12.87	Danush 18.12.87
Kandi 24.12.87	Das 21.12.87
Murali 24.12.87	Ravi 21.12.87
Nazeer 30.12.87	Logendram 21.12.87
Dhanabal 31.12.87	Santhan 21.12.87
Kavar 14.12.87	Nila 23.12.87
Mohamed 12.12.87	Lt. Sudhan 15.12.87
Nikintha 23.12.87	Maj. Murali 23.12.87
Bharath 9.12.87	Mavi 31.12.87
Anton 9.12.87	Mohan 31.12.87
Shankar 11.12.87	Visu 31.12.87

வாள், வலந்தர, மறுப் பட்டன
செவ் வானத்து வனப்புப் போன்றன!
தாள், களங்கொளக், கழல் பறைந்தன;
கொல் ஏற்றின் மருப்புப் போன்றன;
தோல், துவைத்து அம்பின் துளைதோன்றுவ,
நிலைக்கு ஒராஅ இலக்கம் போன்றன;
மாவே, எறிபதத்தான் இடங் காட்டக்,
கறுழ்பொருத செவ்வாயான்,
எருத்து வவ்விய புலி போன்றன;
களிறே, கதவு எறியாச், சிவந்து உராஅய்,
நுதிமழுங்கிய வெண்கோட்டான்,
உயிர்உண்ணும் கூற்றுப்போன்றன;
நீயே, அலங்குஉளைப் பரீஇ இவுளிப்
பொலந் தேர்மிசைப் பொலிவு தோன்றி,
மாக்கடல் நிவந்தெழுதரும்

செஞ்ஞாயிற்றுக் கவினைமாதோ!
அனையை ஆகன் மாறே,
தாயில் தூவாக் குழவி போல,
ஒவாது கூஉம், நின் உடற்றியோர் நாடே.

பரணர்

Lt. Sudhan 15.12.87

Vikram 16.12.87

Dhanabal 31.12.87

Mathi 31.12.87

Visu 31.12.87

Mavi

Cap. Gandhi 23.12.87

Shankar 11.12.87

Mohan 31.12.87

Maj. Murali 23.12.87

KILLING FIELD 87 December

claims	IPKF		LTTE		S.L. ARMY		OTHER MILITANTS		CIVILIANS	
	KILLED	WOUNDED	KILLED	WOUNDED	KILLED	WOUNDED	KILLED	WOUNDED	KILLED	WOUNDED
IPKF	9	6	6	30c					7	2
LTTE			1						2	
MEDIA										

2
1	1	4	86c						
		1							

3
9*	10*	10*	31*					35*	21*
								70	53

4
								4	1

5
						5 EN		2	4
								15	

6
			25c*						
		1						5	

8
						2 P*			

9
8*		3*	4*					2*	1*
								17	3c

10
				4*					

11
		15				4T 3P			
								17	

12

13
						1 T		1	
						1 T			

14
1*	9*								
								4	

15
			1						

16
5	6	7						8	
		1							

17
4	1		13c						

18
						1 T	15c EN		

19
1	1							2	

20
		2	35c						
		2							

21
2		13	19c					5	
8									

23
3	4	13	2						

24
			3		5				

25
3	6								

26
6	8		27c					4	

27
		13	106 C	1*	2*		1c P	27*	18*
						1		30	13

28
								1	

29
6		2	1					3	

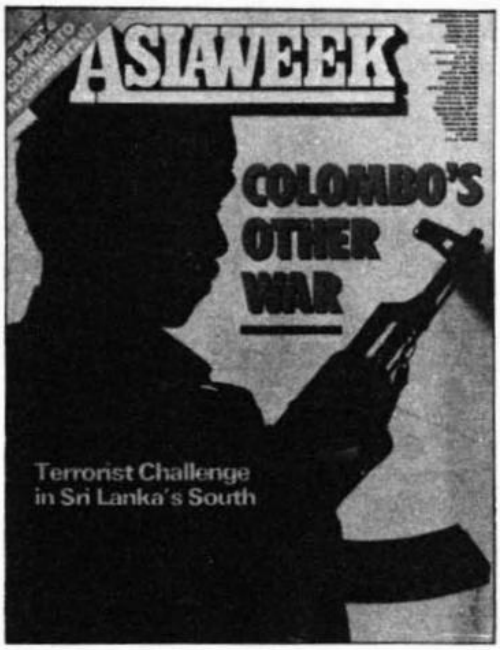
30
		6*						9*	
		1						30	20c

31
		1							

TOTAL											
	49	46	94	37 34c	1	6	16	16c	102	46
	17	6	12	1	5		2		198	67 33c

* - Sri Lankan Information.c-captured. EP-EPRLF T-TELO, P:PLOTE, EN-ENDLF, E-EROS TNA-Tamil National Army CVF-Citizen s Voluntary Force

CHAPTER 7



1988

the heinous crimes of indian peace keeping

January

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IPKF comes under severe criticism in Lankan Parliament.

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JR visits India as a host on its republic day LTTE calls for general strike.

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THE STATESMAN

EDITORIAL

1.1.88

WARNING BELLS IN LANKA

In the unfortunate murder of Harsha Abeywardene, chairman of Sri Lanka's ruling United National Party, underlined the inherent limitations of confronting the outlawed Janatha Vimukti Peramuna with the counter-violence of the Green Tigers, Mr Ronnie de Mel's outburst has served to expose how very vulnerable President Jayewardene is in political terms. As if the ignominy of being repeatedly reminded that the Indian Peace-Keeping Forces are not under his command were not enough, the Sri Lankan President has now been compelled to stomach the humiliation of one of his closest confidants broadcasting to the world that he "stopped referring to Sri Lanka as a democracy since 1982 because there is no democracy". Certainly, the Sri Lankan Finance Minister's biting indictment of his own Government's unsavoury record cannot be dismissed as only a momentary lapse for he had earlier wound up his budget speech in Parliament with a reminder to MPs that they were "obsolete" and with the revelation that it might be his "last budget". However, while it is curious that Mr de Mel said nothing at the time regarding his misgivings about the 1982 referendum which needlessly prolonged the life of the 1977 Parliament, his carping comments seem to offer an accurate index to the groundswell of Sinhalese resentment against the UNP regime.

To add to the failure to resolve the ethnic conflict, the UNP Government stands charged with compromising the country's sovereignty and for its inability to transform Sri Lanka into the promised "second Singapore". It cannot even be pleaded in mitigation that most of the flak has come from the Opposition SLFP-MEP combine or even from the JVP. On the contrary, the not too-veiled criticism of the Government's record that leaders such as Mr R. Premadasa, Mr Gamini Jayasuriya and Mr Lalith Athulathmudali indulge in would seem to suggest that President Jayewardene is in the unenviable position of being isolated even within his own party and Cabinet. It is not that the octogenarian politician has overnight become a liability and an object of ridicule. While few are willing to discount the President's considerable political acumen, the discomniture that is growing within the UNP at the general political drift is primarily a result of considerable Sinhalese pressure from below.

These developments in Sri Lanka would not, in the normal course, have deserved too much attention in this country. But with the IPKF directly involved in quelling the LTTE rebellion in the north and east, New Delhi has reason to view President Jayewardene's precarious position with some apprehension. Following Mr de Mel's curious observation that the Government no longer enjoys any "moral right to rule' and Mr Gamini Dissanayake's earlier protests against the violation of national sovereignty, it would seem that the Indo-Sri Lankan accord can count on only the support of President Jayewardene himself. The situation is further complicated by the fact that the accord has also begun to be linked with the far broader question of the suppression of democratic rights since 1982; it would hardly be an exaggeration to suggest that the JVP is one of the biggest beneficiaries of this emerging opposition within the ruling party. The uncomfortable truth which Mr Rajiv Gandhi would do well to bear in mind in the new year is that anti-Indian sentiment among the Sinhalese is now directly tied to patriotism which is a volatile commodity in a relatively insular society. Under the circumstances, it will require considerable political deftness to ensure that President Jayewardene's earlier prophecy of a favourable constellation of stars and planets holds good in the coming year. As for India, discretion may turn out to be more rewarding than mindless valour.

Start talking

● I believe that, in the long run, LTTE leader Velupillai Prabhakaran will emerge as a patriot. He is fighting for his people. India should, instead of hunting for his scalp, try to bring him to the negotiating table. Otherwise the Tamils of Sri Lanka will be left leaderless after we win for them the limited autonomy promised under the Indo-Sri Lanka accord. The press, especially in the south, should do its best to bring about an amicable settlement between the IPKF and LTTE and LTTE and the Sri Lankan president ('How long can he hold on?' Dec. 6-12).

R.B. PATIL,
DHARWAR.

● ONE factor that the policy-makers do not understand is that the Tamil-Sinhala problem is centuries old. It will surprise many Indians to learn that when Alexander the Great was invading India 2,000 years ago, the Tamils and Sinhalese were fighting for dominance in Sri Lanka. *Mahawamsa* and *Culawamsa* which chronicle Sri Lankan history describe the battles between the two races.

During the days after Independence it was said by someone that the foreign policy of India would be written by the tears to be shed by the Sri Lankan Tamils. In the early sixties there was a political party in Jaffna led by V. Navaratnam named 'Union with India'!

S. SIVAGURUNATHAN,
MYLADUTHURAI, TN.

REPORT

JANUARY 11, 1988

Caught in the Bloody Middle

Sinhalese radicals emulate the violence of the Tamil Tigers

Sri Lanka's latest nightmare began innocently enough. Two days after Christmas, the market in the east coast town of Batticaloa was crowded with shoppers buying provisions for the festive week ahead. Among the throng were three plainclothes policemen. Suddenly a group of youths rushed up and opened fire on the constables. One of the trio fell dead; the two others, both wounded, scaled the wall of a nearby police compound and sounded the alarm. The assailants picked up the policemen's guns, which had fallen to the ground during the assault, and fled.

Within minutes police reinforcements arrived, and an even greater slaughter began. Guns blazing, the police dragged terrified shopkeepers from their stores and shot them. Other merchants were shot inside their places of business, some of them dispatched by a single bullet to the head. Using grenades and gasoline, the police proceeded to burn down 25 to 30 shops. By the time soldiers of the Indian peacekeeping force arrived—and joined, some witnesses charged, in the shooting—25 people were dead, most of them Tamils. None had been involved in the earlier attack on the police.

A leader of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, the guerrilla organization that has been leading the battle for greater autonomy for the country's Tamil minority, promptly claimed responsibility for the assault on the police. He noted that the attack had been planned so as not to "cause any harm to our people." But while Sri Lankan President Junius Jayewardene has said he is confident that the 35,000 Indian troops brought in under a joint accord with India will soon "finish" the Tigers, the Batticaloa attack seemed to herald a new strategy. Unable to defeat the Indians militarily, the Tigers appear to be launching attacks in crowded areas in an effort to provoke a backlash that would lead to demands for the withdrawal of the peacekeeping forces.

But although the Tamil threat has been considerably diminished in the northern and eastern parts of the country, the south has become increasingly engulfed by terrorism from another sector. The challenge comes from the Janatha Vimukti Peramuna, a Sinhalese extremist group that Jayewardene banned in 1983, which has been leading the opposition against the Indian-Sri Lankan accord signed by Jayewardene last July. Three weeks after the signing, JVP terrorists nearly succeeded in assassinating the President. Since then, the group has struck repeatedly against Jayewardene's United National Party, killing local leaders and workers. Two weeks ago, gunmen assassinated Party Chairman Harsha Abeywardene and three companions as they were driving through Colombo.

The JVP campaign has virtually paralyzed the ruling party, especially in the south, where the JVP is the strongest. To counter the threat, the UNP has formed its own militia. A number of prominent members of Jayewardene's government, including Prime Minister Ranasinghe Premadasa and Finance Minister Ronnie De Mel, have urged that the ban on the JVP be lifted. Said De Mel after Abeywardene's assassination: "I don't think a military step can put a stop to the violence." The Finance Minister also suggested that parliamentary elections, not due until September 1989, be held as soon as possible. Jayewardene, however, gave no indication that he was listening. —*By Marguerite Johnson. Reported by Qadri Ismail/Colombo*

LETTER

Sir, – The Tamil militants have ooviously secured their arms from various sources in the world including from India.

One cannot agree with Pran Chopra when he says, "It should have been clear from the start that in the given circumstances overt intervention of the type required would not be practicable for India, all comparisons with Bangladesh being wholly fallacious". The Sri Lankan Tamils (not the same as Tamils of Indian origin) fought for 30 years for a federal state on Gandhian lines within the framework of a united Sri Lanka. Genocide was the answer given by the Sinhalese. If covert or overt action cannot be taken by India to prevent genocide and to grant autonomy that is at least equivalent to what is available to various linguistic groups in India, then public opinion in Tamil Nadu will certainly veer towards extending overt support for the Sri Lankan Tamils. In other words, the situation in Sri Lanka will create disunity in our own country.

V. R. SRIDHARAN

QUILON

Sir, – The moot question is whether it was politically prudent to have jumped into the fray in the manner we did when we knew that ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka was their internal affair and also that there was strong opposition to the Sri Lankan accord in some recognised quarters there. Instead of burning our fingers unnecessarily we could and should have, as we actually did in the initial stages, confined ourselves to Red Cross assistance regardless of the political fallout of this stand at home.

SHIMLA **D. R. TANWAR**

Indian Express, 3.1.88,

NEWS

TELUGU DESAM SUPPORTS EELAM TAMILS

P.UPENDRA, M.P.

India has erred in becoming a party to the Indo-Sri Lankan accord which should actually have been between the Tamil freedom fighters and the Sri Lankan government, states Mr.P.Upendra. leader of the Telegu Desam Parliamentary Party. He further states that India's involvement should have been not to kill the Tamils but to protect them. But exactly the opposite is taking place. Indian army is weakening the resistance of the Tamil militants built up over the years which the Sri Lankan army could not break. This is not what we have bargained for.

Rs.5 to 6 crores (onr crore=ten millions) are being spent per day by the Indian government to keep the army in Sri Lanka. India should withdraw its forces before any further damage is caused to its image, he added.

The Telegraph

INTERVIEW

4 JANUARY 1988

'Time and again, our men have cheerfully accepted high losses just to protect innocent lives'

Gen. K. Sundarji

Q: But the experience in Jaffna would certainly have been different?

A: No. I am just giving an example of fighting in built-up areas. With this background we went into Jaffna. First of all, we could not—and we did not want to—use all our firepower. Even if we had used all that we had, our impact would have been less than in the plains or open spaces.

It was not urban insurgency for the first 10 days. What we fought was a normal, conventional war in built-up areas. They fought like regular forces. They occupied highly fortified places and we had to physically eject them from there—that is all. What they are now doing is guerrilla warfare. But not in the initial phase. It is, therefore, wrong to say that we were not trained in urban guerrilla warfare and therefore could not do battle in Jaffna. That is a totally uneducated conclusion to draw. What could be a more correct assessment is that the Indian Army, or any other army for that matter, is trained for fighting in built-up areas only on black-board and sketches, as it is virtually impossible to vacate large sections of built-up areas during peacetime just for battle training.

Q: What are your comments on fighting under restrictive rules of engagement?

A: I pay special tribute to the magnificent men—the Indian jawans and our young officers, JCOs and so on. Because I often wonder how many armies there are in the world which can accept this kind of constraint on humanitarian grounds and still go in cheerfully and accept high losses just in order to protect innocent lives and property. And our men have done it time and again. I think they are a magnificent lot of people. More than anything else, they have got a large heart—I don't mean a large heart just out of bravery—a large heart in the sense that they have an instinctive feel for humanity. When you tell them that this is the reason why, they appreciate it because they identify that the tally could well include their wife and children; it could be their home. I can't praise them too highly as far as this is concerned.

I want to make two issues clear. When our men are fighting there, and they are fighting under certain constraints, at that point of time any discussion as to whether they should or should not have gone there, is it necessary or not necessary? About this kind of thing, howsoever legitimate it may be from the political point of view, I am only concerned as to what negative impact it should leave on the morale of the fighting man.

The second issue, that again a simple one, is that while discussion with regard to the state of training and type of functioning are all legitimate, it should be done after the fighting is over and not during the fighting. I am not suggesting that there should not be any critical examination either on standard or state of training, or type of functioning, leadership and planning. Everything should undoubtedly be looked at critically with a view to improving. I am not one of those who believe that everything is okay and that we should not question anything. That is equally wrong.

Q: How does the soldier react to his increasing use in law and order activities? First Operation Bluestar and then the peacekeeping role in Jaffna? Isn't he trained to use maximum force unlike a policeman who is trained to use minimum force?

A: This is not quite correct. The primary role of the Army is to defend the sovereignty and the integrity of the nation and to protect the borders. In performing this role, he has to use the maximum force to the best effect, of this there is no doubt. But the second role is to go to the assistance of civil authorities under two conditions: one, restoration of law and order which is beyond the control of the civil authorities, and two, to go to their assistance in the event of acts of God like floods, famine, drought and earthquakes. These are legitimate duties in-built into the charter of duties, and to that extent, we do train for aiding civil authorities. In that type of training, the use of minimum force is a cardinal principle.

Now you asked how does the Army jawan feel about his use. It has never been one of our favourite duties at any level, if you may say so. Given half a chance, naturally a soldier will not like to be used in the role at all. When it has to be done, and it is his legitimate duty, he does it whether he likes it or not.

RAPED

18.1.88	Mamangam/Batticoloa	4 women
19.1.88	Nainamadu refugee camp	25 women
25.1.88	Kathankudi Colony/Ampalathady	4 women
25.1.88	Kinniadyh	Some women
26.1.88	Batticoloa	10 girls
27.1.88	Kankayan Odai/Batticoloa	7 muslimgirls (one burntalive)
27.1.88	Point pedro	3 girls
31.1.88	Point pedro	3 young girls

The Week

COMMENT

THE GREAT FAILURE

Lankan mistake can still be corrected

BY A.P. VENKATESWARAN DEC. 27—JAN. 2, 1988

CLAUSEWITZ is often quoted imprecisely as having stated that "war is diplomacy carried on by other means". In fact, the correct quotation is: "War is politics carried on by other means". But since wars take place usually between countries and nations and they therefore represent an international phenomenon, regrettable though it may be, the basic concept in this famous statement remains unchanged. Obviously, therefore, wars take place only when diplomacy fails. Diplomacy clearly is preferable to the use of violence to yield the desired results and for realising national objectives.

However unpalatable it may be to us, by this litmus test of the numbers of wars fought, there have been more failures in India's diplomacy than that of any other country one can think of since World War II. India has fought four defensive wars: in 1948 with Pakistan over Kashmir; in 1962 with China on our eastern and western borders; in 1964 with Pakistan over Kutch; and in 1965 again with Pakistan in Jammu and Kashmir.

The fifth war in 1971 with Pakistan fell in a slightly different category. Although Pakistan had provided the provocation by suddenly bombing a number of military and civilian airfields in India, the strategic aim of India was to use the opening given by Pakistan, by going to the help of the Mukhti Bahini forces in the then East Pakistan, so as to bring about the birth of Bangladesh as a new state. This achievement is still without any parallel in world history after World War II. The 1971 war had many special characteristics which are to be fully analysed by future historians.

While there was great provocation and pressure at that time on India due to the enormous influx of refugees from the then East Pakistan, with over 10 million men, women and children having to be provided with food, shelter and clothing by an already impoverished India, the Pakistani bombing of our airfields provided the necessary legitimacy for the offensive mounted by us. There was a national purpose served which was understood by and had the support of the entire Indian people.

The latest hidden war which now rages in the northern and eastern provinces of Sri Lanka, in the guise of a peace-keeping operation by the IPKF, however, falls in a totally different catgeory. Never before in independent India has one heard of a 'peace-keeping force' resorting to full-scale hostilities against citizens of a foreign country to support a tottering regime from collapsing under the weight of its own errors of commission and omission. What is more, for the first time India has placed its armed forces under the overall command of a foreign head of state, reducing our gallant forces to the status of a mercenery contingent. This is indeed a blot on the fair name of our armed forces which have only fought in the defence of our motherland or served proudly in peace-keeping exercises of the United Nations.

> **"By the test of the numbers of wars fought, there have been more failures in India's diplomacy than that of any other country one can think of since World War II."**

The India-Sri Lanka agreement of July 29, 1987 is a unique example of the failure of Indian diplomacy on many fronts. Not because our diplomats were lacking in skill, but because the political leadership could not look beyond its nose. The agreement itself was a hastily put-together patchwork without taking into account India's true national interests, the consequences that could result from such an armed intervention by India, the long-term negative impact this would have on the country's reputation and standing vis-a-vis our neighbours, and last, but not the least, the heavy cost in money, material and men that would have to be borne by the nation as a whole in what is evidently a mindless and counter-productive exercise.

IT is a public secret that the decision to conclude the India-Sri Lanka agreement was taken by a small coterie without consulting others who should have been involved. If the professional diplo-

mats had been consulted, the decision may have been very different.

In this day and age of supercomputers and space exploration, when governments have to look as far into the future as is humanly possible, India's involvement in Sri Lanka has broken the basic ground rules of diplomacy and of defence. The national interest of India, which is often quoted as being served by the intervention of the IPKF, in what is essentially an internal matter of another country, has been jeopardised rather than furthered, with no thought of the repercussions. It has become fashionable to brush aside even constructive criticism and to accuse anyone criticising the armed action in Sri Lanka of being anti-national.

Not so long ago, the same charge of being anti-national had been made, at the highest level, against members of Parliament who had questioned the steeply enhanced defence budget. A strange charge indeed, which adversely affects the entire purpose of having an elected Parliament in a democracy, where its members have the duty under our Constitution to debate all matters affecting the nation, whether internal or external, thereby providing the necessary balance which would help in the formulation by government of mature, carefully thought-out policies.

There is sufficient evidence today to establish that the draft of the India-Sri Lanka agreement sent by Sri Lanka had been cleared within a few days by our leadership for formal signature. No one apparently questioned the sudden change of heart of the president of Sri Lanka who had, till only a few weeks earlier, been adamant that he would not merge the northern and eastern provinces and would not tolerate a unified ethnic Tamil entity to be formed. It may also be noted here that the India-Sri Lanka agreement had not been acceptable either to the Tamil population, or for that matter to the majority Sinhala population of Sri Lanka. The regrettable assault on our Prime Minister by a member of the guard of honour, which could have been fatal but for the deflection of the blow struck with the butt of a rifle, was a demonstration of how strongly the emotions run in the majority Sinhala community.

One may pause and wonder what this could entail for the future of the India-Sri Lanka agreement where it is faced with opposition all round (except for the solitary affirmation by its present head of state) including the openly hostile but forced conformity of the country's prime minister and a host of

"The India-Sri Lanka agreement is an example of the failure of Indian diplomacy on many fronts because the political leadership could not look beyond its nose."

members in the cabinet. If one were to consider this in the light of the fierce resistance put up by the LTTE for the last four years against the Sri Lanka government to protect the Tamil speaking minority community from the wanton excesses of the Sri Lankan army and security personnel, aided by foreign mercenaries, how much more would the problem be aggravated by antagonising the entire Sinhala community who view the presence of the IPKF as an abdication by their president of his responsibility to safeguard the sovereignty and national integrity of their country.

The recent statement made by a lieutenant-general of the IPKF, overseeing its operations in Sri Lanka, that the IPKF took orders only from New Delhi, may appear on the surface to be only a minor pecadillo. However, this statement has already resulted in inflaming Sinhala public opinion to fever pitch,

"Diplomacy is a low-cost option, as against defence. It is anachronistic that we should countenance an expenditure on our armed forces which is more than 60 times the expenditure on the external affairs ministry."

compounding the embarrassment already faced by the IPKF.

The situation is made even more bizarre by India turning a blind eye to the non-fulfilment by the government of Sri Lanka of its solemn commitments under the India-Sri Lanka agreement in regard to the devolution of powers for autonomy of the ethnic Tamil population in the northern and eastern provinces. We have been content to accept the assurances' of the president of Sri Lanka who has established a record of going back on such assurances as and when it suits him. Since Annexure C was agreed upon in discussions between India and Sri Lanka in 1983 and quickly reneged upon by the Sri Lankan head of state, there have been a series of similar twists and turns on the part of that government. Sri Lanka is a signatory to the agreement and it should be all the more incumbent on it to observe its commitments both in letter and in spirit. The strident statements made by New Delhi have, alas, been directed at others who have not been party to the agreement.

THE grave situation pertaining today in our relations with Sri Lanka is continuously sought to be obfuscated by self-congratulatory statements by the government and the ruling party which have described the Sri Lanka accord as a great success unparalleled anywhere else over the last 100 years! The same people constantly emphasise that the accord and the action taken by IPKF in its brutal implementation have been welcomed all over the world "from Peru to the Philippines."

It is conveniently overlooked that while a personal congratulatory message from President Reagan was received by our Prime Minister, when he was in Colombo to sign the accord, even before the ink was dry on the document, there had been no such message from General Secretary Gorbachev. This is all the more significant since India does have a treaty of peace, friendship and cooperation with the Soviet Union signed in August 1971, whereas there is no such corresponding document which we have signed with the USA.

The statement by the president of Sri Lanka, explaining to his people the reasons for his concluding the India-Sri Lanka agreement, is even more intriguing. He is on record as having said that he first tried to get help from the USA to contain the insurgency. When that was not forthcoming, he addressed the UK, Pakistan and China for the same pur-

Budgetary provisions	1986-87 (in crores of Rs)	1987-88
Defence	8,728.00	13,438.77
External affairs	383.32	400.43
Education	352.00	1,210.80

pose. He admitted that it was only because he had not received a positive response from any of them that he had been compelled to turn to India for help, since India was "the dominant power in the region" and was "friendly" to Sri Lanka! This statement alone should have set warning bells ringing in the corridors of South Block. But, such is our naivety that this was instead taken as a great compliment to India's status as a regional power. Perhaps no better example exists to illustrate the true meaning of the proverb: "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread".

Let us now turn from this senseless involvement with Sri Lanka and examine the relative priorities given by our government to the areas of defence and diplomacy. As already mentioned, diplomacy is a low-cost option, as against defence, for safeguarding the security and territorial integrity of a country and furthering its national interest vis-a-vis other countries, whether they be located near or far.

The lop-sided emphasis on defence expenditure, now compounded by heavy war expenditure which serves no national purpose except to alienate permanently the people of Sri Lanka, will serve to illustrate the futility of such a policy. For people who are known for their intelligence and capacity to think, it is anachronistic that we should countenance an expenditure on our armed forces which is over 60 times the expenditure on the ministry of external affairs, including all our diplomatic representations abroad. If one were to remove that element in the ministry of external affairs budget relating to grants and loans extended through the ministry to Nepal and Bhutan in particular, and to various Asian, African and Latin American countries in general, the effective budget of the ministry of external affairs would be less than one per cent of the appropriations made for defence purposes.

No one in his senses would prefer to settle through violence what can be settled through negotiations. India which had been advocating a political solution to the ethnic problem in Sri Lanka over the last four years has now turned a complete somersault and is trying to impose a military solution on the people of Sri Lanka.

Either we were correct in our earlier assessment and, therefore, will be seen as being dishonest now by the rest of the world, or we were wrong in our earlier assessment which we now seek to correct by a sudden volte face. In either case, our image cannot be enhanced in the eyes of the world which is watching the unfolding tragedy involving India and Sri Lanka, some with glee and some with mounting concern. It is even sadder and smacks of self-deceit when the government deliberately ignores the way in which statements are being made by the prime minister of Sri Lanka and other senior members of the cabinet, denying the commitments made in the exchange of letters attached to the India-Sri Lanka agreement in regard to Trincomalee, VOA broadcasts from Sri Lanka etc.

WHAT can be a diplomatic alternative to the militarily unpalatable no-win situation which India faces presently in Sri Lanka? One possible way out would be for the IPKF to declare another ceasefire, this time of indefinite duration, and to call simultaneously upon the government of Sri Lanka to fulfil all its remaining commitments under the agreement. Such a move would provide an opening to suspend the ongoing conflict and go a long way to calm down and to regain the confidence of the Tamils in Sri Lanka as well as in Tamil Nadu. It would also demonstrate that the IPKF is even-handed in its approach.

If the Sri Lanka government responds positively, any remaining gaps in regard to the devolution of powers for providing autonomy to the Tamil-speaking provinces can be speedily sorted out. If, on the other hand, the Sri Lanka government does not agree to this course of action (which is more likely), the IPKF would be within its rights to halt all further action and to stay put where it is now, so as to protect the Tamil population there from a possible vendetta that could easily occur otherwise.

> **"To blame diplomats for the incompetence of the political leadership would be unjust...We have to revise our present priorities."**

Our failure so far, in regard to Sri Lanka and especially in regard to our neighbours as a whole, is *not* a reflection on the country's diplomatic service. A professional diplomat can only report and assess the situation and submit possible options to the political leadership, for minimising the damage and maximising the advantage in a given situation. It is for the political leadership then to choose an option which will thereafter be implemented by our diplomatic missions abroad under the overall guidance of the ministry of external affairs. So, to blame the diplomats for what is the result of ignorance and incompetence of the political leadership would be most unjust. In fact, the Indian Foreign Service has won the acclaim of other major foreign services of the world for its competence and effectiveness in projecting our interests abroad.

One also hears from certain quarters of blame being heaped on our diplomatic missions for not projecting a brighter and more positive image of India. One need only refer to the axiom in physics that an image cannot be brighter than the object. In any case, in the long run, we have to set our own house in order and to revise our priorities if we are to make headway in this field.

There is no altruism in international politics and it is mainly the engine of self-interest which propels nations in regard to the decisions which they take. The necessary changes at decision-making levels can be made effective only through a more active involvement of Parliament so as to ensure that right decisions are taken in time and the possibility of errors is minimised.

Professional advice is a categorical imperative in this complex world where man has already landed on the moon and is reaching father into space. In this, there is no place for interdepartmental jealousies and rivalries and there must be an overriding emphasis on national objectives. We go to a tailor to have our clothes stitched and to a barber to have our hair cut. If, perversely, a person goes to the barber to have his clothes stitched and to a tailor to have his hair cut, he will have only himself to blame when he is seen by others to be poorly groomed. ◆

COMMENT

For how long in Sri Lanka and for what?

DEVDUTT

IT IS IN THE VERY NATURE OF THE OVERall situation within Sri Lanka and the overall security environment in the Indian Ocean that if we stick to the present policies India will remain for long in Sri Lanka both out of strategic necessity and political compulsions. Hence there is substantial justification in the observation that India's military action in Sri Lanka will be the longest so far undertaken. It will be India's Vietnam in the sense of its being a costly, bloody and prolonged enterprise in relation to India's limited resources.

The Indian government vehemently rejects the comparison with the Vietnamese war. In a sense it is true. Nevertheless its response is equivocal and vague to the question, "How long will the Indian army remain in Sri Lanka?" Its answer in so many words is, as long as it is necessary to fully implement and Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement because securing the legitimate interests of Sri Lankan Tamils was in India's national interest and India's security. But nobody explains the true import of the vague term "as long as necessary" and nobody spells out the components of the algebric term "India's national interest" and thus it is difficult to assess the duration of India's presence in Sri Lanka.

However, it is not very difficult to decide the terms "as long as necessary" and the terms "national interest" vis-a-vis Sri Lanka. If carefully and critically examined, the tasks which India has undertaken and the broad objective for which the task has been taken up in Sri Lanka, we may be able to assess the time for which India will have to remain in Sri Lanka.

We enumerate below the rationale for the action in Sri Lanka as offered by the official spokesman:—

(1) India has not gone to Sri Lanka only to help solve an internal problem of Sri Lanka. If the unity and integrity of Sri Lanka is preserved and if peace and stability are restored in the region, some of the "important security concerns" of India would also be met. India's primary goal in helping to deal with ethnic strife in the island is to ensure that the situation did not deteriorate in a manner adverse to India's security. In short, India has high security stakes in a contented and peaceful Sri Lanka.

(2) The structure of discriminations against Sri Lankan Tamils—political, social psychological and economic—is four decades old. These cannot be eliminated so soon, even though the Sri Lankan leadership has recently passed a law regarding devolution of power which promises to give Sri Lankan Tamils a place of equality and honour in Sri Lankan polity. There remains a number of "residual matters" of substantial political content which if not properly settled, has all the potential for recrudence of ethnic conflict in the island.

(3) There is also a considerably effective public opinion in Sri Lanka which is opposed to Indo-Sri Lankan Agreement and the new law regarding devolution of powers to Sri Lankan Tamils in North-east Sri Lanka. In fact, Sri Lankan Government faces the serious problem of dealing with large sections of people whose leadership have yet to come to terms with reality and who have yet to cultivate a spirit of accommodation towards Sri Lankan Tamils.

Some political observers fear that as soon as the Indian military presence is withdrawn there will be a backlash of Sinhalese chauvinistic nationalism against Sri Lankan Tamils and India. LTTE leader V Prabhakaran is making a realistic point (though exaggeratingly) when he says that the Indian government should give an assurance that it will provide adequate protection to the Tamils and that their interest is safeguarded on a permanent basis. Consequently, India's commitment will be long term, because Sinhalese chauvinism is not a short-term affair.

(4) If India battled against LTTE, it was not for Sri Lanka's sake but in its own interest. By the logic of it India would have to act in a similar manner against these other elements who sought to undo the Indo-Sri Lankan Agreement from the Sinhala side, since that also would mean an attack on India's interests. Further, India will have to see that Sri Lanka did not repeat the tactics of the past, viz., to seek the aid from countries inimical to India. It may be recalled that in its fight against Sri Lankan Tamils, Jayawardene's government had brought in British privateers, Israelis and Pakistanis.

(5) India's defence strategists are very clear about the importance of IPKF intervention in Sri Lanka in the context of heavy militarization of the Indian Ocean by the superpowers. They think that India's primary concern is Trincomalee port in North Sri Lanka. The military action against LTTE is only a cover. We have 35,000 troops in Sri Lanka under this pretext. It would be unwise to withdraw these troops. The troops should remain for one reason or other. So by implication they mean that conditions of residual insurgency are in India's national interest. LTTE as a force should not be weakened beyond a point. This will justify India's military presence in Sri Lanka. Moreover, if LTTE is fully eliminated our national interest demands that India should work for the emergence of such political forces as will replace LTTE and which will be pro-India.

Ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka is not likely to be a short-term affair; peace and stability will not return to Sri Lanka within a reasonable time. Since it has been shown in the past that India has high stakes in Sri Lankan ethnic harmony and political stability, India cannot forgo or

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weaken the strategic and political advantage and initiative it has come to acquire in Sri Lanka since July 1987. Moreover, the security environment, specially in the Indian Ocean reinforces the need for strengthening and maintaining the advantage India has acquired in Sri Lanka.

It seems that the dominant ruling elite in Sri Lanka has begun to accept the above mentioned facts of life. They are getting reconciled to the inevitability of India's active involvement in Sri Lanka's internal problems. No wonder, in order to make the best of this bad bargain with honour and dignity, Mr Jayawardene has mooted the idea of a Indo-Soviet variety of defence treaty between India and Sri Lanka.

But India has not given a firm positive response to Jayawardene. It is good that it has not done so: because the offer should be examined in a larger perspective. In this context, the following specific issues must be examined.

Firstly, is it in India's real and genuine national interest and is it consistent with the policy of non-alignment (as conceived by Nehru) that India should permanently incorporate in its policy frame, a military approach to deal with the security problems emanating out of internal discussions and conflicts in the neighbouring states in South Asia? Secondly, can India afford the domestic economic 'financial implications of the resultant politico-military foreign policy? Thirdly, the resultant politico-military approach adopted means that India has decided to proclaim, though informally, its own version of Monroe Doctrine, namely, "Hands off from South Asia". Can India afford this? Should India adopt this hegemonistic doctrine? How will it reconcile it with Nehru's non-alignment and the approach underlying SAARC?

There is a fourth dimension of this new policy. All our neighbours in South Asia have serious ethnic problems and other problems of plural societies attempting to become homogeneous nation-states. And since, like Sri Lanka, these ethnic and related problems have all the potential of becoming a security risk for India, the new politico-military foreign policy based on real-politik is not conducive to our national interest. It is also not in tune with our national ideals and values derived from the national movement under Gandhi. Firstly, it will involve exorbitant military expenditure which we can ill afford. Indian economy will be put under extraordinary strains: it is a step in the direction of bankruptcy and indebtedness. It will compel India to go in for compulsory rapid large-scale armament race. The venture in Sri Lanka, it is estimated, will cost us thousands of crores before it is completed.

Secondly, it will bring about structural changes in the balance of power in favour of "military power" as opposed to "civil power" in our polity and thus distort the democratic structure. Dominance of Military Power means dominance of armed forces and the associated civilian bureaucracy, the industrial establishment in the service of the military, the scientists and engineers so employed, the politicians captured and controlled by the above military-industrial complex. To make matters worse, this dominant military power in India will be compelled to build cooperative relationship with military power in other countries including the super-powers and thus India will be drawn into international structures of military power.

This scenario is wholly against the interest of India's teeming millions. Politically and economically it will be a castastrophe, specially for the poor and the vulnerable sections. It was not without reason that Nehru thought of non-alignment as a correct policy for the poor people of India. No-alignment as a sane non-militaristic political approach enabled India to concentrate its economic resources fully on national economic development. Another approach, specially the militaristic hegemonistic approach would have diverted our limited resources in unproductive direction.

The same has been the experience of West Germany and Japan, though for different reasons. The story of rapid prosperity of these countries are the economic success stories of this century. Those countries turned away from armament or military achievement. Capital was available for civilian industry. The economic miracle of West Germany and Japan is the direct inescapable counterpart of minimal military claims on scarce resources.

Military-power in a country impoverishes and debases a people. As has been correctly put, under military power, "every citizen pays the price first with taxes, then as a potential victim".

Indians so far have thought of power in conventional terms, viz, its socially and politically relevant concepts such as power of politicians, bureaucrats and unions and capitalists. But this concept of power will be rendered irrelevant and obsolete if military power takes a dominant position in India.

The Indian people will have to decide whether they are in favour of military power which is antagonistic to the political culture in the Indian constitution.

We believe we must reject the politico-strategic hegemonistic approach to our neighbours in South Asia, including Sri Lanka. We must take the South Asian region as a plural society of continental dimensions and we must accept that it is one civilization unit within the framework of which the policies of the nation-states have to be adjusted on the basis of long range tolerance and co-existence and pluralism as opposed to hegemony, homogenization and militarization.

India's venture in Sri Lanka should not be seen as an isolated event. It cannot be dismissed as a one time deviation from our general national approach. This is because the ruling party and their hawkish advisers promoted consciously the doctrine of hegemony and real politik to justify their action in Sri Lanka.

Therefore Sri Lankan venture must lead to a national debate. Let us bring the issue of military power and hegemonistic foreign policy into full candid and open discussion. Otherwise in the name of so called national interest and chauvinistic nationalism, the policies of the present rulers will push India in a direction where deprivation, starvation and death as well as unfreedom is the lot of the weak and the vulnerable people. **January 1988**

A collapsed bridge

Tamil sentiments against IPKF may overflow

M.G. Ramachandran was perhaps the only chief minister in India who was also important internationally. He played a key role in saving the Indo-Sri Lanka accord. Now his death has raised doubts about the chances of the accord's survival.

True, MGR was not instrumental in the drafting of the accord. He was away in the United States for a medical checkup when the events leading to the signing of the accord took place. He was still there when it was signed.

Later when things began to go wrong, with the LTTE refusing to surrender and the Indian army moving in to enforce the accord, MGR was still away. Rumblings began to be heard from the people of Tamil Nadu whose sympathies were still largely with the Tamils of Jaffna. DMK leader Karunanidhi jumped at it and began criticising the IPKF action, but that did not cut much ice with the people who would still wait for the leader to decide for them.

But, MGR prolonged his stay in the United States. Doubts were raised whether he had been deliberately prolonging his stay there at the bidding of the Centre. For, once in Madras he would have to make his stand clear, which would be a controversial one either way.

MGR's dilemma was understandable. He had all along supported the LTTE cause morally and with money. He had also supported the accord. Now the LTTE was to be portrayed as the one who did not keep its word. But Tamil feelings being what they are, a blatant censure of LTTE would not be swallowed by the people of Tamil Nadu.

MGR, who earlier had acted as the bridge between New Delhi and the LTTE goading the latter to attend talks with representatives of Delhi and Colombo and giving the Tamils of Jaffna refuge in Tamil Nadu territory, now was forced into silence. He was guarded in his few comments on the IPKF action and always asserted that he was cooperating with Delhi for the benefit of the Jaffna Tamils. At the same time, he never openly came out against the LTTE.

New Delhi was immensely satisfied with that. It appreciated his predicament, and was happy as long as MGR could keep the Indian Tamils' sentiments in check. Which he did admirably. In fact, MGR became Delhi's best bet in the Sri Lanka crisis.

But now with his death, Delhi has been bereft of a strong defender of the accord. It has also lost its only link with the Tigers who, it hoped, could be armtwisted to honour the accord. One can gauge Delhi's concern from the fact that LTTE leader Kittu was not allowed to place a wreath on the body of MGR. He was reportedly kept under house arrest in Madras.

Staunch ally. *MGR with Rajiv Gandhi*

Delhi has been bereft of a defender of the accord. It has also lost its only link with the Tigers. For the Tigers, too, MGR's death is a big loss.

Delhi knows full well that whoever ultimately succeeds MGR will not be able to support its stand as effectively as MGR. No one can keep Tamil sentiments in check as MGR did, at the face of the DMK leader breathing fire and brimstone. Delhi cannot afford to have a leader in Tamil Nadu who will criticise the IPKF action. At the same time, a leader who blindly tows the Delhi line would be disowned by the people of Tamil Nadu, who may then rally round Karunanidhi.

Unfortunately for the Centre, there is just no leader in AIADMK or the Congress(I) who can play the balancing role that MGR played.

The death of MGR is a big loss for the Tigers too. Even while losing to the superior might of the Indian army, they were hopeful that they would be finally able to get out of the situation without much loss of face through the good offices of MGR. They had been appealing to him to prevail upon Delhi to stop the IPKF drive in Jaffna. They knew that only MGR could convince Delhi to change its stand. "He was one man on whom they could bank on. They needed him at this juncture. Now it will be difficult to have someone who can deal firmly with Delhi", said a Tamil militant in Madras.

It was believed that MGR was trying to find a solution to the Lanka impasse and that something concrete would have taken place in early January.

In short, the death of MGR has put both the government of India and the Tamil militants in a fix. New Delhi was also banking on him to hold the Indian Tamils in check when the IPKF completed its operations and elections to the promised provincial councils were announced by the Jayewardene government.

Delhi also knows that a good number of AIADMK leaders and cadre are against the accord and the IPKF action in Jaffna. But none of them raised his voice as long as MGR was there. Now these elements may even split the party or walk over to Karunanidhi's camp. And Karunanidhi certainly would not look after New Delhi's interests in Tamil Nadu.

JAN. 3—9, 1988 —VINCENT D'SOUZA

Diary from a Doomed Land

COMMENT

Ashok Mitra

January 2-9, 1988

In Sri Lanka everybody is waiting, what for nobody is clear. The killings go on in the north and the east and with each day, much to the sardonic delight of the Sinhalese gentry, the IPKF finds itself sinking into a deeper quagmire. The killings and arson are kept up also in the south. Such being the situation, what can the poor elite of Colombo do? They have somehow to amuse themselves, they flock to the New Year ball parties and keep visiting Vilasita Bipani, the ravishingly dazzling luxury departmental stores.

ONE has returned exactly after a year, and yet, one has not returned to the same country. Colombo looks about the same. But illusion is not reality. The events of the past one year are not reversible, and it is now a no-win situation for anybody and everybody. Sri Lanka is dying.

Earnestly, the civil servant will try to win you over to his point of view regarding when and how things went wrong. The Agreement was signed on July 29; July 30 and 31 were the two days during which the ceasefire was supposed to become effective; the first three days of August were set aside for the Indian troops to disarm the LTTE cadres; on August 4, the troops would be back in India. Nice, neat time table. Instead, five months have gone by, the arms remain with the LTTE boys—and girls; and they forgot to tell the Sri Lanka administration that India would land the equivalent of four army divisions in and around Jaffna. Apart from the other factors, the sheer logistics of servicing four army divisions takes the breath away. The president, unfortunately, is in no position to do anything about it; true, the Indian military personnel are under his overall command; what could he, poor thing, however do if the Indian prime minister chooses not to keep him informed. Mutual trust, the civil servant's earnestness scales a higher peak, is what it is all about, whether the Agreement succeeds or flops depends on. Meanwhile, there is this additional problem. The Indian army wants to be in the eastern province in greater numbers, particularly in Batticoloa. Can one imagine the kind of hell that would let loose should this be allowed to happen? The JVP elements are straining at the leash. The moment the Indian army asserts itself in the east, they will be on the rampage. The young people belonging to the Janatha Vimukti Peramuna do not of course belong to the same league as the LTTE; unlike Velupillai Pirabhakaran, they are no believers in Pol Potism, at least not yet. But savagery, in the present situation, can spread easily. Already some tactical exchange of arms has taken place between the rebels in the north and those in the south. How much one wishes those who take decisions on the Indian side, meaning the Indian prime minister and those close to him, take into account such developments, and restrain the IPKF from romping around Batticoloa in such conspicuous numbers. Besides, the Sri Lanka civil servant rubs in the point, suavely: the presence of Indian troops is now turning out to be increasingly counter-productive in Jaffna too. They have failed to disarm the LTTE insurgents; by their overbearingness they have also made themselves even more unpopular than the Sri Lanka troops ever were. The civil servant is unable to forget the fact that he is, at the same time, a private citizen; he cannot shed his earnestness either. Mutual trust is what the Agreement is about. The Indian prime minister must trust the Sri Lanka president, begin gradually to withdraw the troops, give JRJ just two months, and the latter will see to it that Sri Lanka is restored to tranquillity. Since the Indian military personnel have not been quite up to it, the Sri Lanka troops will resume their responsibility to enforce peace in the Jaffna area. The Indian prime minister must give them two months, and, at the end of it, Sri Lanka will once more belong to the Sri Lankans, Sinhalas as much as Tamils, and won't it be loverly.

The civil servant, despite his conditioned earnestness, knows that what he is propounding is a pipe-dream, or a sales pitch which is bound to fail to sell the line. The Indian troops will not go away; from the look of things, they are there for keeps. The Indian prime minister has made an outlay in Sri Lanka; he is not going to indulge in any disinvestment merely because Sri Lankan public opinion is solidly against the presence of the Indian army on their soil. It is an extraordinary ambivalence of attitudes the Sinhala population are afflicted with. They detest the fact of their president inviting the Indian troops, but there is admiration too for the smart manoeuvres of the president, the wily old fox, who is making the Indians shoulder the entire burden of peace restoration operations in the north, the government and the country would otherwise have gone bust; the money saved on account of the Indians coming in can henceforth be spent on more cosy purposes.

The earnestness of the civil servant bowls one over, he too however speaks according to a script. So is the case with everybody else. The Indian troops, having arrived, are unlikely to go away, ever. Fatalism is spliced with cynicism, easily crystallising into the hatred towards the Big Brother all small countries in any neighbourhood learn to nurse. The history-minded university don, not so earnest as the civil servant, indulges in heavy sarcasm to compensate for the deficiency. The Nazi troops moved into Austria following the *Anschluss*, and stayed. The Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement, after all, is of a similar historical import; it is fraternal emotions spilling over; the Indian elite have come to the help of their counterparts, in order to save the crumbling class structure in Sri Lanka; precisely on account of that, the Indian army is now destined to play a major role in hastening the process of social revolution in the island. Just consider China or Vietnam or Cambodia; in all Asian countries, social revolution is either preceded by, or accompanies, a patriotic upsurge caused by external imposition of a particularly exacerbating sort. The presence of the Indian army is thus the answer to the Sri Lanka would-be-revolutionaries' prayer. Cutting across barriers of erstwhile party affiliations, it is uniting the Sinhalese in a common resolve. In each of the university campuses, students have gone over *en masse* to the Janatha Vimukti Peramuna; does it not remind one of the fifties and sixties when they had, with almost equal fervour, proclaimed allegiance to the Communist Party, or alternately, to the Sama Samaj Party? The Sinhalese don is no less confident on the other point either: the arrival of the Indian army, and the manner in which they have gone about in search of LTTE cadres and arms, will convince the Sri Lanka Tamils too that their long-range interests lie in rediscovering roots within the island; it is not an MGR across the Palk Strait, but the JVP down south, or a surrogate yet to make its appearance, who will underwrite their security and future prosperity. Echoing the earnest government servant, the history don too considers it a logical outcome that the JVP and the LTTE will soon discover themselves in each other's company, in case they have not already done so.

Meanwhile, the battle is on for Batticoloa, the battle between the Indian prime minister's intent to move more of his troops into the eastern province and the Sri Lanka president's determination not to let that happen for dear life. The Indian prime minister has to keep up a brave front; he cannot openly admit that if the LTTE, a non-signatory and all along a sceptic, has refused to adhere to the

terms of the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement, president Jayewardene, his co-signatory and joint architect of the Agreement, has also equally failed to honour its spirit. The substance of the constitutional amendment passed by the Sri Lanka parliament deviates from the commitments entered into by Junius Jayewardene, at the time of the signing of the Agreement, on issues vitally affecting Tamil interests. The president could not push his party too much, prime minister Premadasa's dead body would have stood in the way. The Tamils over here are fully cognisant of the fact that the enacted constitutional amendment concedes them little, very little; the Tamils in Tamil Nadu are also slowly becoming aware of this trump card which has been handed over to the LTTE in their war against the rampaging Indian divisions. Should the Sri Lanka army now succeed in resettling, or settling for the first time, large groups of Sinhalese in the towns and villages of Trincomalee and Batticoloa, the Indian goose would be even more comprehensively cooked. Which is why the battle of Batticoloa, unreported in the press, represents the most crucial phase of the war in Sri Lanka, the Indians wanting to move in in much greater numbers, the Sri Lanka ministry of security will have none of it. President Jayewardene—the earnest civil servant will let you know in confidence—is sad, very sad at the trucculence being displayed by his young friend, Indira Gandhi's offspring. He, the Sri Lanka president, had the choice, after all, of handing over Trincomalee to the Americans and calling in the Israelis and the Pakistanis; didn't he? Instead, he chose India. There must be mutual trust, and consideration shown towards the problems confronting either party. The president's position will be rendered hopeless once Batticoloa is gobbled up by the Indian army. Four divisions today, maybe eight divisions will move in tomorrow; they are no doubt under the president's nominal command, but nobody bothers to inform him how many of them have come and why.

The civil servant is not exactly dissembling, but it is still an instance of compartmentalised vision. Bravado gets mixed up with manifestations of hoping against hope. President Jayewardene's partymen, including those who endorse the Agreement, would like the IPKF now to go away, it has accomplished what they wanted it in the main to accomplish, smashing the LTTE base in Jaffna. The rest of the job is for the Sinhalese themselves to complete. With no Indian army in the way, the UNP's anti-insurgency outfit, the Green Tigers, will be able—so the calculations go—to annihilate the Tamils in the north and the east in no time, even if that process assumes a form dangerously close to genocide. But perhaps president Jayewardene himself would in fact want the Indian army to stay; it is his greatest insurance against insurgency in the south, and there is also the grim possibility of his own partymen attempting a coup against him once the Indian army departs, which is why he is so anxious to have a defence treaty with India, let it be the army of all seasons and for all contingencies.

The left parties in Sri Lanka have their own reasons for preferring the IPKF. Having lost their erstwhile constituencies, on their own they are no match for the brute power which the JVP is in the south and even the emasculated LTTE is in the north. Never mind the latent irony of it, the army of the alien bourgeois state has to save them from the onslaught of anarchical ultra-nationalism. And yet, the left parties too are equally acutely aware that every extra day the Indian troops stay on on Sri Lanka soil, they succeed in creating even greater hostility towards India and its government amongst the people, and particularly amongst the Tamils. The latter, more so those in and around Jaffna, are now in a position to compose tracts on the comparative virtues and vices of the Indian and Sri Lankan armies. The Sri Lankan army men, when they were around, dared not interfere with the daily tempo of civilian living. The IPKF, in contrast, is just like any ordinary army of occupation: curfew for hours on end, public transport suspended for little rhyme or reason, civilians not even allowed to ride on bicycles, markets and food supply disrupted for days on end, total censorship clamped on the press, and searches, unending searches, day and night, night and day. Beyond a point, the Indian army personnel, like army personnel anywhere else in the world, are bereft of manners. While stories of widespread rape are exaggerations, molestation of young girls is indeed taking place; what, after all, can the *jawans* do, it will be stated on their behalf, if young girls hide under their clothings, detonators and grenades? It therefore hardly causes any astonishment that, in the circumstances, his Pol Potism notwithstanding, Velupillai Pirabhakaran has emerged as the symbol of Tamil pride and Tamil resistance. So if it is a matter of their getting rid of LTTE insurgency in the north and the east first and then departing for home, there is going to be no early departure for the IPKF. The LTTE snipers will continue to call the shots, even if four expatriate divisions grow into fourteen and India's fisc reaches near-exhaustion.

Other, much more disturbing questions will keep nagging . The government of India, the Indian left, the Sri Lankan left are all vehement in their view that the Indian army personnel have a sacred obligation to make the Tamils agree to fall in with the terms of the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement. Have the Indian opposition at least looked into the details of the Agreement, do they know what kind of arcadia it promises for the Tamils? The Thirteenth Constitutional Amendment and the Provincial Councils Bill, which are supposed to translate the terms of the Agreement into legal reality, have now been passed by the Sri Lankan parliament. They depict a frightening picture. The devolution of powers and responsibilities is of much less substance than what even India's blatantly centrally biased constitution concedes to the constituent states. What is even more grotesque, not even five per cent of the nation's overall resources, including tax resources, is intended to be passed on to the provinces, and the two Tamil provinces cannot hope to get more than one-fourth of this insignificant slice. Should they need additional funds, the matter is to be decided by a permanent finance commission in which the central authority will have a permanent majority. It is therefore difficult to determine the real villains in the drama which has been unfolding—Pirabhakaran and his comrades who refuse to be party to this charade of transfer of power, or the bureaucrats and advisers surrounding India's prime minister who perhaps could not care less whether the Sri Lankan Tamils lived or perished.

This sham restructuring of the Sri Lankan polity is also unlikely to take place in the near future. There is seemingly no hurry on New Delhi's part, let Pirabhakaran be first hunted down and shot in cold blood by the IPKF, the political issues could then be sorted out in leisurely manner. The Sri Lankan administration could not agree more. According to the terms of the Agreement, the process of elections to the provincial councils should have been completed before the end of December. Even legislation to settle the modalities of these elections is yet to be passed by parliament.

Everybody is waiting, for what nobody is clear about. The killings go on in the north and the east, and with each day, much to the sardonic delight of the Sinhalese gentry, the IPKF finds itself sinking into a deeper quagmire. The killings and arson are also kept up in the south, but few reports are permitted to appear in the press. And about everybody takes it for granted that the country will soon cease to be. Such being the situation, what can the poor elite of Colombo do? The economy languishes, the general prospects for the polity are grim, so what, they have somehow to amuse themselves, they flock to the New Year ball parties, and keep visiting Vilasita Bipani, the ravishingly dazzling luxury departmental stores. In Sri Lanka, it is not so difficult to discover serendipity, even if doom is round the corner.

Far Eastern Economic REVIEW

REPORT

Militants and ministers

Rebels and cabinet members snipe at the government

By Manik de Silva in Colombo

President Junius Jayewardene is facing the toughest period of his presidency. Divisions within his cabinet have resurfaced, compounding the problems of the minority Tamil insurgency in the north and east. Majority Sinhalese subversives in the south have continued to demonstrate their ability to strike at will, despite the president's public pronouncements that he would finish them off in weeks.

An Indian peace-keeping force (IPKF), now more than 35,000 strong, has not yet been able to break the back of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), the dominant Tamil separatist group. The IPKF took control of the northern Jaffna peninsula after a major offensive in October. But in recent weeks, the LTTE has shifted its base to the eastern Batticoloa district and shown that it has not been crushed, even in Jaffna. Recent LTTE bombings in Jaffna have delayed the return of normalcy in the north.

There is little doubt that the IPKF has made progress in disarming the LTTE in Jaffna. The Indians have unearthed large caches of rebel arms in the peninsula. Since the beginning of the month, five rebel boats ferrying arms from the north to the east have been sunk by the Indian Navy.

Despite these reverses, the LTTE has been attempting to pressure Jaffna civilians not to allow Colombo to restart its civilian administration. Posters are prominently displayed and handbills have been distributed demanding that public servants stay away from their offices. Cooperation with the IPKF, the posters threaten, will mean death.

In a counter-propaganda drive, the IPKF has been displaying its own posters promising the citizens of Jaffna that they will be protected. But to the people of Jaffna, the repetition of recent events in Batticoloa — where the LTTE clashed with both the Sri Lankan police and the IPKF in heavily populated areas, resulting in dozens of civilian deaths — is a dangerous possibility.

In the east, the rebels have been following a strategy of exposing Muslim civilians to crossfire in an effort to alienate Muslims from the IPKF. Problems in Batticoloa, the eastern provincial capital, have been compounded by police reprisals in the local bazaar following the killing of an off-duty policeman and the wounding of two other constables soon after Christmas. A sniper fired at the policemen, provoking the reprisal in which at least 19 civilians were killed and dozens of shops gutted.

The IPKF too has been having its own problems with the Muslims of the east. IPKF activities triggered by the LTTE have cost several Muslim lives. Colombo, as well as the Indians, has played down these incidents which attracted international attention. The Muslims themselves decided to take on the LTTE at Kattankudy, a Muslim town of 50,000 people on the outskirts of Batticoloa, between 29 December and 1 January, resulting in the killings of some LTTE district leaders and 30 Muslims.

The IPKF is confident that if the public would cooperate in helping arrest LTTE followers, the problems in the east could be quickly eliminated. Maj.-Gen. Jameel Mahmood, the IPKF's eastern commander, told Transport Minister M. H. Mohamed, whom Jayewardene sent to the east to sort out what appeared to be a deteriorating situation, that it was essential the public should keep the IPKF informed of LTTE activities. If the Indians had the necessary information, they could act against the LTTE, he said.

Indian official with Jayewardene : cabinet divisions.

Reports in the Indian press have expressed concern that the IPKF has been slow in dealing with the LTTE in the east. These criticisms have not taken into account India's reluctance to expose the east to a Jaffna-style operation which caused a lot of civilian deaths.

In the south, the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP — people's liberation front) and other subversive groups have continued to make sporadic strikes after the 23 December assassination of Harsha Abeywardene, chairman of the ruling United National Party (UNP). Abeywardene's killing came three days after Jayewardene had toured the troubled southern districts and made several hardline speeches vowing to liquidate the subversives within two weeks.

While some of Jayewardene's opponents chose to regard the Abeywardene killing as a response to his speeches, investigations suggest that the assassination plan had been in place for some time. "The speeches may have influenced the timing, but the people who did it could not have mapped it out in three days," an investigator said.

An attack on a police station in the Ratnapura district, southeast of Colombo, a week after the UNP chairman was killed, seriously disturbed the authorities. An armed group raided the police station, locked up the policemen and escaped with arms and explosives. The inspector-general of police conceded that there had been security lapses at the police outpost.

The opposition has accused the UNP of organising its own "Green Tigers" militia to counter the southern subversives who have made UNP supporters their special targets. Asked about this group recently, Jayewardene said that his party's MPs were asking for protection. It was not possible for the government to cover the large number at risk, and some auxiliaries were being used to provide protection to MPs and some others. These people had to work with the police, Jayewardene said.

Local press reports said about 500 auxiliaries, including some former JVP members, have been given small-arms training and are available in areas where UNP members are under threat. The government has neither confirmed nor denied the reports.

Adding to Jayewardene's problems are speeches by some of his ministers demonstrating dissension within the ranks of government. Winding up the recent budget debate, Finance Minister Ronnie de Mel told parliament that a 1982 referendum, which extended the incumbent legislature's term by six years, was the cause of many of the country's problems. Shortly after de Mel's controversial speech, Mohamed said there would be no general elections this year, despite demands for a poll by de Mel, among others.

Prime Minister Ranasinghe Premadasa made a speech which analysts believe was loaded with innuendoes. It indicated clearly that Premadasa was pushing for a reappraisal of policies on Tamil separatists, as well as on the southern subversives.

'IPKF should save Tamils against Sinhala aggression'

NEWS

From Our Staff Reporter

MADURAI, Jan. 14.

Mr. V. R. Krishna Iyer, former Judge of the Supreme Court, says that the IPKF has become a war-waging force. It should save Tamils against Sinhala aggression, he said addressing a seminar held under the auspices of the Indo-Sri Lanka Friendship Society here last night. Mr. Krishna Iyer said that not only had LTTE men but also a number of civilians had died.

Mr. Krishna Iyer said the people of India and Sri Krishna should come together and a meaningful ceasefire, with the condition that no individual should carry arms, should be attempted and something positive should be done during the ceasefire. He felt that all people, both Tamils including the LTTE and the Sinhalese in Sri Lanka should be included in negotiations to bring about a solution. Without the LTTE, he said, there would be no solution for the problem.

Alleging that the Sri Lankan President, Mr. J. R. Jayewardane, was unreliable, Mr. Krishna Iyer said that all the clauses in the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement had been violated and the Tamils as an ethnic minority were being liquidated. Devolution of powers and the fusion of the North and the Eastern region as one province were the major planks over which the Tamils were struggling.

Mr. P. Nedumaran, president of the Tamil Nadu Kamaraj Congress stated that the accord had not even reached a take off stage.

Mr. R. Parthasarathy, president, Madurai Kamaraj University Teachers Association, Dr. Thamizh Kudimagan, Mr. H. N. Fernando and a number of others presented their views on the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement. Miss Maheswari Velayutham presided.

Plea for phased withdrawal of IPKF

MADRAS, Jan. 14.

Mr. V. R. Krishna Iyer, former Supreme Court Judge, and Congress (I) leaders from Tamil Nadu today demanded an immediate ceasefire in Sri Lanka. While Mr. Krishna Iyer demanded a "phased withdrawal" of the IPKF from Sri Lanka, the Karnataka Fisheries Minister, Mr. M. Raghupathy, and the TNCC(I) leaders wanted it to be total and immediate. They were speaking at a meeting organised by the Forum for National Integration on the "Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement and its after-effects."

Mr. Krishna Iyer, who traced the history of the Tamils' struggle, said the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement was being proclaimed as the greatest event of this century. "This is the greatest folly of the century .... The accord has only produced discord," he said. The agreement was to fulfil certain obligations between two parties, which were the Tamil groups and the Sri Lankan Government. But by a "gross misunderstanding of the law of contract, there is an agreement between one party, namely, the Sri Lankan Government and a non-party, which is India."

Mr. Krishna Iyer said the Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, should tell the Sri Lankan President, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, on January 26 (when the latter will be in Delhi for witnessing the Republic Day parade) that he (Mr. Jayewardene) should provide devolution of power to the Tamils and fuse the Northern and Eastern provinces. "The Indian people must tell the Sri Lankan Government: Have the charity to give devolution .... We have not been able to get Mr. Jayewardene that the word he gave here on the accord is fulfilled."

He said the Opposition parties must together demand in Parliament that there should be ceasefire and the IPKF should observe ceasefire. The ceasefire should be until further orders" and not for "24 hours or 48 hours". The ceasefire should also apply to the JVP. Besides, there should be a phased withdrawal of the IPKF from Sri Lanka. A devolution package for the Tamils must be prepared and there should be fusion of the Northern and Eastern provinces. The devolution of powers to the united Northern and Eastern provinces should be akin to List 2 of the Indian Constitution, Mr. Krishna Iyer said.

The Karnataka Fisheries Minister, Mr. M. Raghupathy, said the IPKF should withdraw and allow Mr. Jayewardene and the Tamil militant organisations to settle the issue.

Mr. Raghupathy alleged that the agreement was entered into to divert attention from the Bofors scandal.

The AICC(I) member, Mr. M. Arumugaswamy, alleged that the TNCC(I) was inviting "mercenary speakers and writers" to speak in favour of the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement. "They are performing a drama. Is this the fate of the Congress in Tamil Nadu?" he asked.

Mr. K. Jegaveerapandian, TNCC(I) member, said the TNCC(I) claimed that it had collected 50 lakh signatures in support of the agreement. If the TNCC(I) had the strength to collect 50 lakh signatures in the State, nobody else would be ruling Tamil Nadu. He said it was announced in Delhi that any Congressman opposing the agreement was a traitor. "As we are patriots and we do not want the IPKF to lose its dignity, we have convened this meeting," Mr. Jegaveerapandian said.

Mr. G. Bhuvaraghan, former Congress Minister of Tamil Nadu, said everything had gone wrong with the agreement right from the beginning.

Mr. I. Lawrence of the Forum for National Integration, welcomed the gathering. Mr. Sheikh proposed a vote of thanks.

THE HINDU, Tuesday, January 12, 1988.

Venkateswaran criticises Indo-Sri Lankan Agreement

MADRAS, Jan. 11.

The former Foreign Secretary, Mr. A. P. Venkateswaran, today said the signing of the Indo-Sri Lankan Agreement was an "object-lesson of how an accord should not be signed" and the manner in which the Agreement was signed was tantamount to "putting the cart before the horse."

Mr. Venkateswaran made this observation while speaking on "India's Foreign Policy" at the annual day celebrations of the Tamil Nadu Intellectuals' Forum.

He said the Government of India, instead of first resolving the question of devolution of power to the Tamils, decided it would sign the Agreement first and then resolve the problem of devolution of power. "Why should the Sri Lankan Government implement devolution? They are not fools. No devolution will ever take place under the Agreement. We will have to leave Sri Lanka in circumstances worse than we went in, "the former Foreign Secretary said. The Government of India had successfully alienated not only the Sinhalese but also the Tamils. The way things were happening, it was clear that "it is a grievous injustice to the people of Tamil origin," he added.

"Never before in history has a Peace-Keeping Force been sent to fight one side of the conflict; never before has it been sent to be placed under a foreign head of State. We have jeopardised and insulted our sovereignty."

Not only were LTTE men getting killed but also the IPKF soldiers. There were certain terms in the Agreement which were not being fulfilled. Statements had been made in Parliament that the Government was sorry that those terms were not being implemented but it was assured that they would be implemented. If the terms were not being implemented, the Tamils should not be killed at least.

"While the LTTE is being asked to lay down arms and give cooperation to the accord when it was never a signatory to the accord, Mr. Jayewardene, who is a signatory, is not being asked to implement the accord. Why pick on the former," Mr. Venkateswaran asked.

Replying to a question from the audience, he said Tamil Eelam was not an answer to the ethnic problem. The answer lay in equal treatment of all citizens in Sri Lanka and constitutional guarantees for that equality.

ASIAWEEK

Now, Terror in the South

Dominic Sansoni

Colombo checkpoint: Executions.

Greg Girard — Asiaweek

Security forces in Eastern Province: Fresh violence

REPORT

Barely three weeks after the accord, the JVP struck. On Aug. 18, the terrorists tried to assassinate President Junius Jayewardene inside the high-security Parliament building in Kotte city on the outskirts of Colombo. While the Sri Lankan leader was spared, the grenade attack killed two people and shocked the ruling party. Riding on anti-government sentiments, the JVP spread further south, temporarily seizing control of several villages. Any resistance was brutally snuffed out: street vendors who defied their orders not to sell government newspapers were killed; UNP supporters were executed.

By the time a stunned Colombo set up a special military front in the south, the JVP was already well-entrenched. The arrival of government soldiers has merely slowed its sweep across Southern Province. Even as villages and towns teem with army and police patrols, the executions of JVP enemies continue — only now they are carried out after dark. In towns such as Kataragama, the army has been forced to take over the distribution of newspapers because the local people are too frightened to do it themselves.

A chilling response to the vicious anti-UNP backlash has been the emergence of armed pro-government goon squads. Dubbed the Green Tigers (the UNP's colour is green), they have begun prowling the south, striking at those who oppose the accord. Most are small-time thugs affiliated with the ruling party. The government has allocated 600 of these "home guards" to each electorate and 150 to each ruling party parliamentarian. The MPs are responsible for arming and training them as private armies.

The village militias have outraged many Sri Lankans. Thunders ex-MP Tennyson Edirisooriya: "Jayewardene is using fear of the JVP to set up a paramilitary state."

Vijender Tyagi — Asiaweek

Jayewardene: "We'll win"

Analysts say the JVP has skilfully exploited the suffering of the common people to further its own cause. Professing Marxist beliefs, it has attracted many recruits among the poor and oppressed. Says Edirisooriya: "In supporting the JVP, the peasants feel they are making use of these violent elements for their own purposes. They have no other means of opposing the government, so they feel the JVP is the only answer."

Dr. Henry Pathirane, a father of two, is one example. He grew up amid deprivation. By the time he left medical school, he was committed to Marxism. The malnourished villagers who flocked to his Kolonne clinic only strengthened his belief that revolution alone could rectify the imbalances in Sri Lankan society. Says Pathirane, who is now in army custody: "I saw that nothing had changed since the days when my family went hungry and I decided that the JVP was the only alternative."

For his part, Jayewardene plainly feels he is justified in fighting fire with fire. The president has ordered security forces to "annihilate the JVP in two months' time." He has also ignored repeated appeals by Prime Minister Ranasinghe Premadasa, a vocal critic of the July 29 accord, to lift an on-again, off-again ban on the leftist group.

But Jayewardene's determination to exterminate the JVP grows from a certain irony. After a bloody insurrection in 1971, the extremists were virtually wiped out by the Sri Lanka Freedom Party government. The group was banned and its fiery leader, Rohana Wijeweera, was sentenced to life imprisonment. During campaigning for the 1977 national elections, however, the UNP, then the opposition, made political capital of alleged government atrocities.

On coming to power, it set all JVP members free and even formed an alliance with the radical group. The UNP-JVP honeymoon ended in August 1983 when evidence surfaced that the Sinhalese extremists had fuelled bloody ethnic rioting a month earlier in the hope that the unrest would topple the government. The leaders of the JVP, which had earlier been outlawed again, went underground.

Five years later, the JVP is still a force to reckon with. What is worrisome, however, is that in their bid to stamp out the extremists, frustrated government troops may "kill thousands of innocent civilians in a repetition of what happened in the north and east," says political analyst Sarath Gunawardene. Already, the army is making mass arrests in the south, identifying JVP members with the help of UNP informants.

Col. Lakshman Algama, military coordinating officer for the southwestern front, insists the counter-terrorist campaigns are not comparable. Says he: "In the north and east, we could not get any information [about the Tamil separatists] from the public because they did not trust us. In the case of the JVP, we will eventually get the information from the local people, because we can communicate with them. We will win."

Many Sri Lankans believe, however, that the answer to the JVP problem is political, not military. There have been no parliamentary elections since the UNP came to power in 1977. Some observers reckon disgruntled Sri Lankans have turned to the rebels only because they have no other means of protest. As Edirisooriya puts it: "The government has to realise that this uprising can be put down only by the ballot, not the bullet."

JANUARY 22, 1988 ■

25.1.88.

WHEN FRIENDS SAY NO

For those ruling party loyalists for whom the least criticism of the Indo-Sri Lankan accord is tantamount to the betrayal of national interests, as well as for well-meaning individuals such as General Sundarji to whom every expression of doubt over the IPKF's role amounts to "a negative impact on our soldiers' morale", the resignation of Mr Ronnie de Mel should pose certain awkward questions regarding the viability of New Delhi's policy in Sri Lanka. Unlike Mr R. Premadasa who is readily dismissed in this country as a mindless bigot, or Mr Lalit Athulathmudali who has been hysterically accused of being a pawn in the hands of the American-Israeli lobby, Mr de Mel cannot easily be cast in the rôle of a sinister ogre making a political living out of anti-Indianism. True, the disturbed conditions in his parliamentary constituency in Mattara district, and the severe repression of the JVP's alleged supporters, may have influenced the former Finance Minister's decision to quit, but it would be gross folly to interpret the action as part of the Sinhalese backlash.

Even a cursory glance at Mr de Mel's record as Finance Minister indicates that far from being a hardliner who believes in a scorched earth military offensive against the recalcitrant Tamil militants, he was in the front line arguing for a negotiated settlement on the grounds that Sri Lanka could not afford a civil war. In fact, when the Indo-Sri Lankan accord was signed on July 29, Mr de Mel and Mr Gamini Dissanayake were the only Ministers whom President Jayewardene took into his confidence. That even someone who risked the wrath of the Sinhalese hardliners by urging moderation when Colombo clearly thought it unfashionable to do so has now said farewell to the Government is a pointer to the growing perceptions of disaster and to President Jayewardene's complete isolation. It matters very little that rather than directly attack the accord and the Indian intervention in the Northern and Eastern provinces, Mr de Mel has chosen to focus on the present UNP Government's lack of political legitimacy and its deliberate suppression of democracy. For the truth is that President Jayewardene's attempted solution of the ethnic conflict and misgivings about the Indo-Sri Lankan accord cannot be separated from the broader issue of democracy in the island.

It does not really need the outlawed JVP to remind the Sinhalese people that the Parliament which is legislating to establish the provincial councils and the enforced merger of the two "Tamil" provinces received its mandate as long ago as in 1977; Mrs Sirimavo Bandaranaike is repeatedly telling them so, and she is hardly to be dismissed as "anti-Indian". Indeed, with the JVP growing in popularity in the south, and the ruling UNP plagued by the internal dissensions resulting from a growing distance between President Jayewardene and the rest, the portents for political stability are not encouraging It may well be argued that the IPKF is doing a tremendous job under difficult and trying conditions and fulfilling the terms of its brief, but New Delhi has chosen to be blissfully impervious to the fact that the brief itself is flawed. Now that Mr de Mel has also said so, and acted in accordance with his conscience and poiltical instincts, it should set the warning bells ringing for Mr Rajiv Gandhi. Unless, of course, the Prime Minister is deluded enough to believe that the IPKF should again bail out the beleaguered Sri Lankan President, this time by going to the assistance of his troops fighting the JVP

LETTER

CHASING A MYTH IN LANKA

SIR,—While talking to students at Santiniketan during his recent visit, Mr Rajiv Gandhi justified the presence of the IPKF in Sri Lanka by pointing out that Sri Lanka would otherwise have become a base for forces unfriendly to India, and pose a threat to the southern border of the country. It is certain that President Jayewardene will not accept this argument, the Indo-Sri Lankan accord notwithstanding.

When one compares the justifications concerning Nicaragua, Afghanistan and Sri Lanka one discovers a remarkable similarity. All of them are based on imaginary threats. Very few people believe Mr Ronald Reagan when he says that the Leftist forces in Nicaragua pose a threat to Central America and the USA. It is equally clear that the Russian intervention in Afghanistan was based on a wrong reading of the situation and unjustified, a conclusion recognized by almost all countries barring a few like India.

It has been stated that India sent her armed forces into Sri Lanka for two reasons—first, to protect the ethnic Tamils presumably from the Sri Lankan security forces and, secondly to deny bases in Sri Lanka to forces unfriendly to India. Both arguments are flawed. The fact remains there have been considerable Tamil casualties since the arrival of the IPKF in Sri Lanka. Besides, how can the occupation of the northern and eastern parts of the island stop the construction of foreign bases in the rest of the island if Sri Lanka raises no objection. And what happens when we pull out?

—Yours, etc., M. M. BOSE.

Calcutta, January 20.

R.K. Lakshman, Times of India, 28.1.88

ALL THOSE WHO HAVE DIED ARE TRAITORS WHO DESERVED TO DIE

DOCUMENT

Our motherland cannot be rescued from slavery except by overthrowing the illegitimate, reactionary fascist dictatorship of the India-dominated puppet Jayewardene clique and of various traitors in disguise who are supporting him.

The people recognise these as the traitors in service of reaction today: The Vijaya Kumaranatunga clique which split the SLFP at the behest of Jayewardene and then embraced Tamil Eelamist terrorist murderers; the Communist Party, the Lanka Sama Samaja Party and the Nava Sama Samaja Party leaders who supported the betrayal of our motherland; the Independent Students' Union which is the associate of Tamil Eelamist murderers; various social service, human rights, women's artists groups and associations which are the instruments of the Catholic Church. These are the reactionaries and traitors who supported the so-called peace agreements, who betrayed the country, who supported the Indian aggression.

These traitors have now organised themselves to assist the Hitlerite Jayewardene clique against patriotic forces. They have brought to Colombo and are conspiring with Uma Maheswaran, an Indian stooge and a Tamil murderer. They have trained some persons in Batticaloa in one of his camps; armed by him and with the blessings of the Jayewardene clique, they are now set to attack the patriotic forces .....

James Athugala, who was punished recently, was one of these trained persons. Nandana Marasinghe was one of their organisers and a police informer. The activists of the Vijaya Kumaranatunga clique, of the Communist Party, of the Janata Sangamaya located at Devasaranaya which is now part of the reactionary Catholic Church, opponents of so-called chauvinism, are the other parties to this.

Patriots

Do not be deceived by these traitors .....we have correctly recognised the enemy. We shall punish them as they deserve. In the struggle for the liberty of our motherland and our people, no traitor can be forgiven.

Patriots, Unite

Sweep away all traitors and their supporters.

THE NATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR PUNISHING TRAITORS

1988-01-18. (JVP)

PUNISHMENT TO ALL ENEMIES OF THE MOTHERLAND

★ All those who supported the so-called Jayewardene-Gandhi Peace Agreement which betrayed our motherland and our people to the Indian imperialists and the legislation to establish Provincial Councils.

★ All those who are supporters of the traitor Jayewardene fascist clique and its murderous policies.

★ All those who support the presence of the aggressor forces and who attempt to whitewash its destructive actions.

★ All those who attempt to betray the patriotic forces that enter the struggle to protect the motherland from the Indian aggressor forces and their puppet, Jayewardene.

★ All those who kill, torture or harass the patriotic forces in accordance with the illegal repressive laws enacted by this illegitimate government in order to repress the patriotic forces.

★ All those who organise terrorist cliques of various forms and assist the traitor Jayewardene to repress the patriotic peoples organisations (Deshapremi Janata Viyaparaya).

★ All those who engage in activity of any kind against the patriotic forces and who seek to mislead the people on behalf of the enemies of the motherland.....

Patriots

We shall fight against Jayewardene, against his fascist clique, against his fascist killers, against the Green Tigers that he has organised. We shall climb over mountains of corpses; we shall swim across lakes of blood; we shall sacrifice our lives; we shall fight for the independence of our motherland. This we swear to you.

However, allied with this open enemy and fighting against the patriotic forces are many enemies in disguise. These enemies, directed by the traitor Jayewardene and reactionary international organisations, appear before the people as progressives, social workers, human rights activists, artists, peasant leaders, or trade union leaders. Backed by secret funds from the UNP or from suspect organisations of the Catholic Church like SEDEC or Devasaranaya, acting in concert with Eelam terrorist organisations, they have already brought into being terrorist gangs, sometimes armed by the State, in order to terrorise and kill patriotic forces.

We can only protect our motherland by sweeping away not only the foreign aggressor, not only the open traitors but also this third force of traitors in disguise.

Who are these enemies, this third force?

The Lanka Sama Samaja Party which from its birth on December 18, 1935 has misled the working class, has betrayed the working class at every critical juncture, has in effect worked for the UNP in return for privileges, honours, etc. for the reactionaries.

The Ceylon Communist Party which from its inception on July 3, 1948 has fed itself from the World Socialist Movement but has acted as stooges of the UNP, betrayers of the entire working class movement in 1980 and has in effect betrayed the revolutionary movement in Sri Lanka.

Vijaya Kumaranatunga who entered the SLFP through marriage only in order to split what was then the principal anti-UNP force in the country, who spawned a bogus Naxalite conspiracy in order to allow Jayewardene to postpone the general election of 1983, who has now embraced Eelam terrorist murderers and is acting in all respects as the obedient acolyte of Jayewardene.

Vasudeva Nanayakkara who has acted in a similar fashion and a number of so-called trade union leaders who fatten themselves on the movement but refuse to lift a finger against the repression of the working class by Jayewardene.

The Janata Sangamaya which battens on support from SEDEC and Devasaranaya and other suspect foreign organisations and is a reactionary tiger in the disguise of a peasant organisation.

A clique of various human rights and women's activists who receive assistance from reactionary international organisations and are active in disseminating leaflets and pamphlets.

The Indpendent Students' Union which is only a catspaw of the Eelamist terrorist organisations.

These are the enemies of those who are true enemies of Jayewardene, of the real opposition to him.

At this critical juncture, all those have taken a stand on behalf of Jayewardene, on behalf of reaction.

All these are the enemies of the motherland and therefore deserve to be punished. Independence for the motherland and peace and liberty to the people requires that all these should be swept away.

Death to all enemies of the motherland.

Liberty and Peace to the People.

JOINT HEADQUARTERS OF PATRIOTIC ARMED FORCES.

January 25, 1988. (JVP)

THE LTTE LEADER APPEALS TO THE U.N.

the text of the letter addressed to The Secretary General, U.N.O. by Mr. Prabhakaran

"Your Excellency, We wish to refer to our letter of 16.11.87 addressed to you. We acknowledge your reply stating that the matter was referred to the Human Rights Commission of United Nations. The so-called "IPKF" (Indian Peace Keeping Force) continues relentlessly its atrocities on the people of the Northern and Eastern Provinces. The Indian Government intervened in the internal problem of Sri Lanka to mediate between the Sinhalese and the Tamils. Now they are trying to gain foothold in our land. Indian Civil Administrators have been brought here and they are being engaged in civil administration. The police duties are being done by the Indian police. Military camps and sentry posts have been set up within the distance of every kilometre. Military camps have been opened in the following Educational Institutions:

Jaffna College - Vaddukkoddai.
Hindu College - Karainagar.
St.John's College - Jaffna.
Central College - Jaffna.
Ladies' Convent - Pandatharippu.
Union College - Tellippalai.
Ramanathan College - Maruthanamadam
Ladies' College - Uduvil.
Arumugam Vidhyasalai - Mallakam.
Maha Vidhyalayam - Sandilipai.
Murugamoorthy Vidhyalayam - Suthumalai.
Ramakrishna Vidhyalayam - Kondavil.
Saivaprakasa Vidhyasalai - Sithankerni.
Maha Vidhyalayam - Thiruvadinilai; and many other centres unknown to us in the Peninsula.

Curfew has been continuously imposed for more than one and a half months apart from occasional relaxation of a few hours in specified areas in the Northern and Eastern Provinces. Jaffna Peninsula is in darkness because of the power cut imposed by the Indian Army. Consequently, all the industries are at a standstill. Drinking water supply is at a standstill. Transport is curtailed to the minimum and a few vehicles are allowed to ply with passes issued by the Indian army. The Peninsula is suffering from severe food shortages and 800,000 people are on the verge of starvation. Fishing and agriculture are at a standstill. This has brought about an economic depression. Most of the hospitals and nursing homes remain closed, and infectious diseases are on the increase owing to lack of medical facilities. Indiscriminate artillery and cannon shellings on residential areas continue unabated consistently and consequently several people get killed or wounded. Nearly two thousand innocent civilians have been already killed as a result of the military offensive undertaken by the Indian Government. For example - on 9.11.87 four civilians were injured by shellings at Sandilipai and they were taken to Jaffna General Hospital in a car bearing a white flag. The car was shot at by the Indian army at Navaly; the four injured and the two who were taking them were killed, and the car was burnt.

Raping has become a daily occurrence. When the people brought these incidents to the notice of the Indian army officers, the reply given by them was that such things are quite common during war time. At Uduvil, four girls were raped by the Indian army personnel. When the parents reported this to Major Parameshwaran and Captain Sharma, Major Parameshwaran admitted that such incidents had taken place and apologised for what had happened. On 5.11.87, The Indian army broke open a store at Urumpirai and asked the people around to remove the things they wanted. When the people got into the store, all the males were ordered out and the women who were inside the store were brutally raped. One of those raped was a two-month pregnant woman and the other is a small girl who had not attained age.

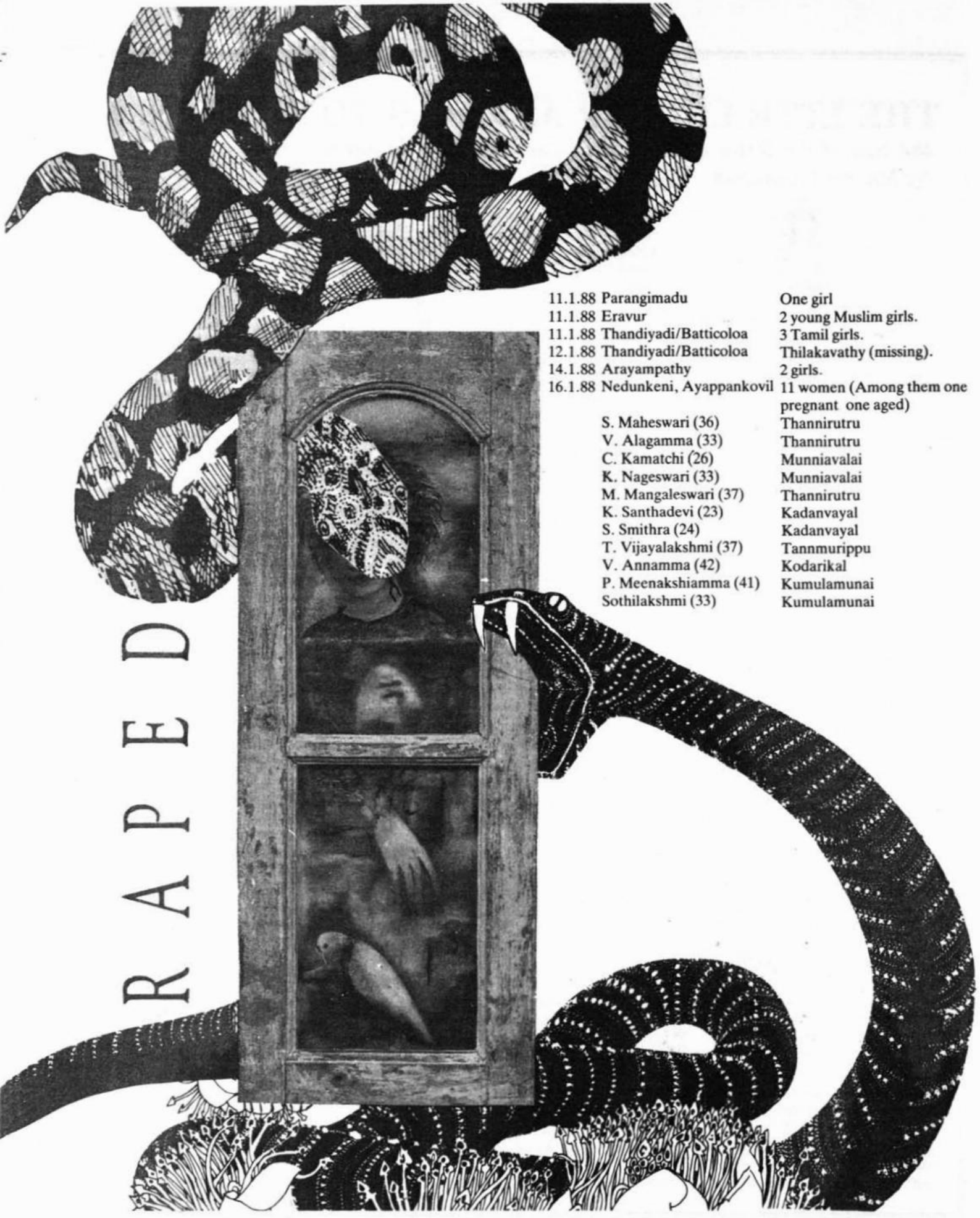
There is a systematic destruction of all schools, houses and business establishments. The business centres at Urumpirai, Thirunelvely and Jaffna Bus-stand areas where businesses were manned, were the places where burglaries were committed by the Indian army.

It could be proved by the secret message sent by a person named Chopra to the Palaly Army Commander, intercepted by us, that the 48 hour cease-fire announced by the Indian Government on 21.11.87 was not observed by the Indian armed forces. In Trincomalee, seven innocent civilians were shot and two of them died on the spot during the period of cease-fire. They carried out many search-and-destroy missions in that period, and many people were arrested.

There is no truth in the Indian propaganda that food is being distributed, relief being given and the situation is returning to normal. This is being done to deceive the world community at large.

They have silenced all local news, and are not allowing the foreign correspondents to enter this area. There are no telephone links. Every possible way has been blocked to the outside world not to get to know the truth.

We appeal to you to send a team of investigators from the Human Rights Commission to inquire into the violation of human rights and the army atrocities. You may also request the Indian Government to stop the military offensive operation, and to start negotiations to solve all related matters. It would allow our people to live peacefully without any form of persecution by the armed forces. No time should be lost as our people can no longer endure the sufferings."



11.1.88	Parangimadu	One girl
11.1.88	Eravur	2 young Muslim girls.
11.1.88	Thandiyadi/Batticoloa	3 Tamil girls.
12.1.88	Thandiyadi/Batticoloa	Thilakavathy (missing).
14.1.88	Arayampathy	2 girls.
16.1.88	Nedunkeni, Ayappankovil	11 women (Among them one pregnant one aged)
	S. Maheswari (36)	Thannirutru
	V. Alagamma (33)	Thannirutru
	C. Kamatchi (26)	Munniavalai
	K. Nageswari (33)	Munniavalai
	M. Mangaleswari (37)	Thannirutru
	K. Santhadevi (23)	Kadanvayal
	S. Smithra (24)	Kadanvayal
	T. Vijayalakshmi (37)	Tannmurippu
	V. Annamma (42)	Kodarikal
	P. Meenakshiamma (41)	Kumulamunai
	Sothilakshmi (33)	Kumulamunai

REPORT

Colombo's policies strike a chord

JANUARY

India's foreign policy hawks are crowing over what they see as their diplomatic coup in Sri Lanka. Sinhalese hawks call New Delhi's intervention a sell-out by President Junius Jayewardene. Tamil hawks in both countries call it betrayal of Tamils by India. All three are misperceptions, but each will add friction to Indo-Sri Lankan relations.

Each group refers to compromises in Sri Lanka's foreign policy, which Jayewardene promised Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi at the end of July last year. If carried out, these revisions will reduce a slant towards the West which the President has given Sri Lankan foreign policy, eliminate the possibility of a foreign military base in the excellent harbour at Trincomalee, and disengage Sri Lanka from certain aspects of recent deals with the Voice of America, Pakistan's army and Israel's Mossad intelligence agency.

But this is no coup. During the 20 years it was in power, Sirima Bandaranaike's opposition Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) had followed a foreign policy similar to – and supportive of – India's.

Nor are the revisions a sell-out since all they would do is to revert foreign policy to that of the SLFP. But the Sinhalese hawks – including the SLFP – have denounced Jayewardene's agreement because it has allowed the Indian army on to the island.

■ *Pax Sri Lanka: how* The Hindu *(Madras) saw last July's peace agreement*

Tamils condemn the agreement as betrayal because India settled for much less than Tamil militants could have won through battle – if New Delhi had not intervened.

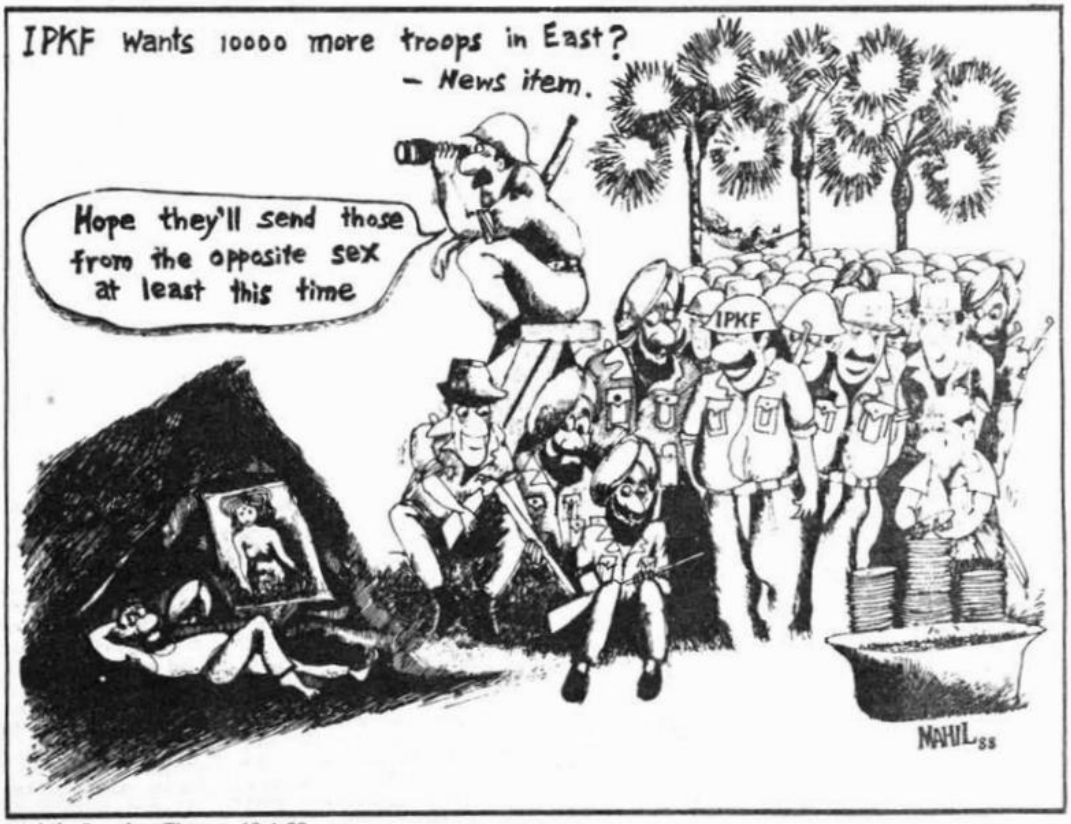
The longer Indian troops stay, the more Sinhalese pride will be hurt. The Indian troops came at Jayewardene's request, and because they are under his authority he can order them out at his discretion. He has already sent back two Indian warships which had been lurking on Colombo's horizon.

The Indian army is disarming Tamil militants faster than Sri Lankan troops could have managed. Success in flushing out the Tamil Tigers will sufficiently strengthen Jayewardene to enable him to stand by his promises of regional autonomy for Tamils. It would be unwise for the SLFP to encourage the right-wing Sinhalese Janatha Vimukti Peramuna (People's Liberation Front – JVP) to embarrass Jayewardene or to scuttle the accord with India.

The SLFP's sympathies towards the Indian position may influence changes in the accord but not its annulment.

The worst scenario for Indo-Sri Lankan relations in 1988 is friction. There is no likelihood of a major rupture or discord. ■

Pran Chopra in New Delhi


IPKF wants 10000 more troops in East?
– News item.
Hope they'll send those from the opposite sex at least this time
IPKF
MAHIL 88

Mahil, Sunday Times, 10.1.88

THE STATESMAN

REPORT

Lanka Parliament criticizes IPKF

Lankans want IPKF to go back

COLOMBO Jan 22—The continued and increasing Indian presence in Sri Lanka's Northern and Eastern Provinces nearly six months after the Indo-Sri Lanka Peace Accord came in for sharp criticism from both Government and Opposition Benches in Parliament yesterday during the debate to extend the Emergency for another month.

Leading the attack from the Government Benches was the Prime Minister Mr Ranasinghe Premadasa followed by the National Security Minister Mr Lalith Athulathmudali, speaking in Parliament for the first time in several months. From the Opposition Benches the Opposition leader Mr Anura Bandaranaike accused the Indian forces of "deliberately prolonging the agony in order to ensure permanent Indian presence in the two provinces.

As if that were not enough India-bashing for one day, the Chief Government Whip's Office in an official Press release yesterday quoted President Jayewardene as telling his Parliamentary group that his visit to India next week was to have "a direct dialogue with the Indian Prime Minister and Government as some information does not reach Mr Rajiv Gandhi."

That statement is seen here as a serious indictment of the Indian diplomatic mission in Colombo as a whole and was tantamount to accusing the Indian envoy here of withholding from his Prime Minister vital information on developments relating to the ethnic conflict and the operations of the Indian Peace-Keeping Force here.

Many alleged exesses of the Indian forces against the civilian population in the two provinces were mentioned on the floor of the House yesterday with the Prime Minister referring specifically to a 75-year old woman being raped by a member of the IPKF. Said the Prime Minister: "I don't know what kind of word can be used to describe that We will have to invent new word."

Mr Premadasa who has all along been critical of the Indian role in Sri Lanka's ethnic conflict taunted India with the observation that the fourth largest Army in the world had failed to contain terrorism in the North and East of Sri Lanka, and recalled that when the Sri Lankan Army captured the Vadamarachchi area in the North, "India told us that she would teach us a lesson if our Army was allowed to invade Jaffna We were accused of genocide" following the excesses of the Indian Army the people of the North and East were now asking for the return of the Sri Lankan Army, he said "Having experienced the treatment given by the step-father, the people are asking for return of the father" Mr Premadasa observed

Mr Athulathmudali, told the House that the people throughout Sri Lanka wanted the Indian forces to leave as early as possible, and the same feeling was being expressed in India itself. Noting that the Opposition had said various things about the Indian forces here, he said there were several stories in circulation but he recalled only one of them for the lesson it offers

A Tamil friend of his in Vavuniya was in the habit of calling the Sri Lankan Army as the Sinhalese Army Recently his friend has admitted that the Indian forces were not like our forces. Asked by the Minister to explain, his friend had said that when the Sri Lankan forces searched houses, they caused little or no problem and at the end of the search they always had a word of apology. But when the Indian troops came for investigation they turned the house upside down and did not even have a word of apology. At the end of the search the Indians would inquire" Are there any goats and any females?"

Mr Athulathmudali told House that the people of all communities were of one mind on that the foreign Army should depart, and that during his visit to India with President Jayewardene he would discuss with the Indian authorities the process of withdrawing the IPKF from Sri Lanka He said "The democratic people want the IPKF sent away. The terrorists want the IPKF out so that they could take command once again. Therefore we must act carefully. The experience all over the world is that external forces come to a country for their own end. It is only a bankrupt political party such as Tulf which is unaware of that position."

Mr Anura Bandaranaike said that people of all communities had suffered at the hands of the Indian forces and the three cardinal promises in signing the peace accord had not been fulfilled first that the terrorists would lay down arms second that the IPKF would withdraw by the end of September or by October 1987 third, that peace would return to the North and East. "Thousands of Sinhalese were driven out of their homes and some 400,000 Tamils have been rendered homeless. The Tamil community has suffered more than any other at the hand of the IPKF who were brought to protect them. A number of Tamils have been butchered. The sister and brother-in-law of the Chief Justice of Sri Lanka were also butchered by the IPKF in Jaffna Mr Samuel, an old teacher of Royal College who was running a tuitory in Jaffna was also butchered. What could that 85-year-old teacher have done? A large number of people were butchered. That seems to be the only fundamental achievement of the IPKF" Mr Bandaranaike said.

The Opposition leader told the House that a Buddhist priest from Pollonaruwa had said that the IPKF personnel had tea in a boutique run by a Sinhalese, then grabbed the cassette-recorder that was there and left after firing shots in the air. People hid when they heard Indian vehicles approaching. All this shows that people have been reduced to the level of dogs The Sinhalese now hide when they hear Indian vehicles This is in Pollonaruwa not in the North or East. The accord has reduced the country to this sad state" he said

Meanwhile Sirimavo Bandaranaike Leader of the main Sinhala opposition party, the Sri Lanka Freedom Party today issued a special message to the people of India on the eve of Republic Day and called on the Indian Government and Parliament to face the reality and understand that continued Indian support for the Jayewardene Government would mean nothing less than propping up a tottering puppet regime.

In a hastily summoned Press conference for representatives of the Indian media at her Colombo residence Mrs Bandaranike explained that she was releasing that statement in view of Mr Jayewardene's visit to India on January 25 and the likelihood that a draft treaty pertaining to defence and security would be signed.

She said the people of Sri Lanka of all communities were not opposed to peace "they are opposed to a peace accord hatched in secrecy and signed in undignified haste, without the slightest effort at genuine consultation, let alone consensus and consent."

COMMENT

INDIA'S MESS IN LANKA—I

Rushing Where Others Feared To Tread

By G. C. KATOCH

AFTER criticizing the various arguments that have been put forward to explain India's involvement in Sri Lanka, G. C. Katoch, a former Defence Ministry official, says that "something obviously went wrong" with the "breezy expectation" that Operation Pawan would be quickly over. Given the kind of bungling that seems to have taken place, and the high Indian casualties the writer feels that there is need for a "quick and impartial inquiry" into the entire affair, especially in view of the political uncertainties in Tamil Nadu after M. G. Ramachandran's death.

In the concluding part tomorrow, Mr Katoch argues in favour of negotiations with the LTTE not only because it still remains popular with the Sri Lanka Tamils but also because weakening the Tigers beyond a point would expose the Tamils to future oppression.

In any other civilized country with a professional army peace-time casualties in such large numbers, on foreign soil, would have resulted in a public uproar, followed by a military enquiry and swift punishment to those responsible for it. Here in India we seem to be more interested in Hershman, Bofors, garish weddings and the like than in the mauling received by our soldiers in Sri Lanka.

THE Indian Peace Keeping Force in Sri Lanka can claim many firsts. This is the first time since Independence that our armed forces are fighting not for India's defence but to maintain the territorial integrity of another country. The first time ever that the army has been called upon to tackle urban insurgency on a massive scale. And the first time that there is utter confusion about what our soldiers are dying for.

Whatever may have been the original justification, or political compulsion, for signing the Indo-Sri Lankan agreement, the standard arguments now being put forward to justify the military operations are as follows. First, if we did not go in there, some other foreign power would have. Secondly, we had to ensure that Trincomalee does not become an American base. Third, India must assert its regional power status by flexing its military muscle. And finally, the LTTE must be destroyed if the agreement is to be fully implemented in order to safeguard Tamil interests. Each one of these arguments can be stood on its head with ease.

REASONING

Take, first, the reasoning that but for us some other country would have sent troops to Sri Lanka. It is known that President Jayewardene did approach the USA and the U.K, but neither country was willing to be militarily involved. Even Pakistan seems to have cold-shouldered the idea. If they had indeed sent troops, surely a gleeful Indian military establishment would have watched the fun from the ringside; now the Pakistanis have the last laugh. But, of course, we had to rush in where wiser leadership feared to tread.

Again, it is preposterous to suggest that the best way of helping Sri Lankan Tamils is to liquidate their leadership and crush their armed strength which is their only insurance for survival; but more of this later. The Trincomalee argument is likewise inane. It is true that Trinco is one of the finest and largest natural harbours in the world, and is strategically located. But the U.S. navy cannot really want to build a base there unless it loses Subic Bay in the Philippines, which is unlikely.

Besides, the Pentagon would be wary of investing in long-term commitments in the Tamil-dominated areas of an unstable Sri Lanka regime. The Pentagon may also be inhibited by the fear that a piqued India could well react by offering an east coast naval base to the Soviets. And if the Americans did need Trincomalee badly enough, one does not see either the Sri Lanka Goverment or the Indian forces in that country stopping them. Accord or no accord, a few bill on dollars' aid would do the trick.

Lastly, not many thinking persons would be inclined to take the flexing-our-military-muscle argument seriously but for the fact that it is being heard in the highest echelons, civil and military, in this counrty. It is also being said that the IPKF's casualties are a small price to pay for asserting our dominance as a regional power. In the first place our power status is determined not only by military capability, which is no secret, or by posturing, but also by economic and political strength, which could do with building up.

Physical intervention in the domestic problems of a tiny neighbour can hardly add to our stature as a regional power. As for the 1,400-odd dead and wounded soldiers being a modest price for advertising India's regional power status, some people bitterly ask: how many of the callous policy-makers in South Block would be willing to contribute to the "small" price tag by sending their sons and close relatives to be killed or maimed in Sri Lanka?

Going by the official figures (which are correct, though what prevents army Headquarters from publishing casualty lists is not clear) the number of casualties in an operation of this kind has been clearly excessive. In particular, the losses were distressingly heavy during the initial phase. It is a pity that people in large parts of the country are not sufficiently aware of this. The concern

The Primeminister must have been badly briefed when he called the LTTE a small unrepresentative group. Contrary to the official claims the LTTE still enjoys much popular support. The Tamils know that it was the LTTE that protected them from Sinhalese oppression and the Sinhalese army for years and will continue to do so after the Indian forces withdraw.

GOOD NEWS! NO INDIAN IS INVOLVED IN THE BOFORS KICK-BACK BUSINESS!
SRI LANKA? WELL, JUNIUS AND I ARE GOING TO SORT OUT THE PROBLEM. EVERY THING WILL BE O.K.
FOR PUNJAB WE HAVE A SOLUTION. WHEN WE IMPLEMENT IT PRESTO, THE PROBLEM WILL VANISH!
FOR GORKHA CRISIS THAT BUNGLING JYOTI BASU IS RESPONSIBLE...
THERE IS NO INFLATION AS FAR AS I KNOW. THE PRESS IS LYING....
THAT'S WHY I LIKE TO LISTEN TO HIM. HE MAKES ALL THE PROBLEMS JUST DISAPPEAR!

R.K. Lakshman, Times of India, 26.1.88

shown by defence analysts and the media generally has also, sadly, been rather muted.

Let it be remembered that Operation Pawan, as it is named and as the name signifies, was thought to be a pint-sized task planned to be completed in just 48 or 72 hours. Something obviously went wrong with that breezy expectation as the army began the first fortnight by burning a finger or two. After three months the troops are still fighting, and still incurring some casualties every day.

If, therefore, the impression gains ground that there has been serious bungling somewhere, it wouldn't do to ridicule it. In any other civilized country with a professional army, peace-time casualties in such large numbers, on foreign soil, would have resulted in a public uproar, followed by a military inquiry and swift punishment to those responsible for it. One has only to recall the 1987 USS Stark incident in the USA and the sacking of air defence generals in the USSR after Rust's landing on the Red Square in Moscow.

Here in India we seem to be more interested in Michael Hershman, Bofors, garish weddings and the like than in the mauling received by our soldiers in Sri Lanka. What is seen to be professional incompetence or worse is not something to bother about. One general, after being virtually sacked, has been reinstated. (Was it South Block's special way of proving the BBC wrong?)

It is high time that a proper, quick and impartial inquiry is ordered into the reasons for these abnormally heavy casualties. To be credible, such an inquiry must be headed by a retired army commander of acknowledged professional ability and integrity. No serving officer, whatever his seniority or standing, will be able in the present environment to pinpoint lapses on the part of politico-military decision makers, intelligence agencies, and civil and military bureaucracies, all of whom could have been at fault. Nor will he be in a position, without risk to his career, without risk of serious harassment, to identify and name any guilty ones at senior levels.

Certainly no High Court or Supreme Court judge, past or present would do. Not so much because some judges who have recently headed special inquiries have, in the public mind, blotted their copy book, but more because the probe suggested will need military background and a professional rather than a purely judicial approach so as to get at the truth and thwart any attempt to sweep muck under the carpet.

Fortunately, we do not have to look too hard for suitable retired generals who should fit the slot: Jagjit Singh Aurora, M. L. Chibber and I. S. Gill are among the names that readily come to mind. If conducted well, the inquiry cannot bring a bad name to the army. It will only enhance its professional image.

There are now two factors to foul up the messy situation we were already in. One, the uncertainties of Tamil Nadu politics in the post-MGR era. His personal charisma and domination of the State scene apart, M. G. Ramachandran also provided a useful link with the LTTE. Whichever of the AIADMK leaders finally succeeds in establishing herself or himself at the top, she or he will not have the kind of acceptability that MGR had; and none dare take up an anti-LTTE stance and get away with it. Mr M. Karunanidhi will almost certainly want to use the anti-IPKF platform to convert chauvinist Tamil sentiment into votes.

Then there is the Jayewardene factor. The Foreign Office mandarins seem to cling to the belief that he has a big stake in the Indo-Sri Lanka agreement and, therefore, his survival is necessary for its "successful" implementation. The view that the wily old man is using Indian forces to do his dirty work is not the less valid for being widely aired. We went in to help the Sri Lanka Tamils, to keep peace there, and ended up by waging war against them on behalf of the Sinhalese.

PURPOSE

Let no one doubt that when President Jayewardene's purpose is served, he will want to throw out the IPKF. He has publicly said so in so many words. And notwithstanding what this or that general may say, one does not see in the Indian leadership the sort of finesse and guts needed to hold on against the wishes of Junius Richard Jayewardene. When he asks you to quit, you quit.

Maybe in your magnanimity you will leave behind much of the arms and equipment you have taken to Sri Lanka. Perhaps also offer "aid" of a few hundred crore rupees to repair the damage done by IPKF operations. And leave the Tamils to the mercy of the Sinhalese. It is not hard to guess how kind the Sinhalese will be. The scenario can be no different should President Jayewardene disappear from the scene. Only the IPKF will be back in India earlier.

(To be concluded) 30.1.88,

INDIA'S MESS IN LANKA—II

TIME TO STRIKE A DEAL WITH LTTE

By G. C. KATOCH

AN answer to the Sri Lankan problem calls for an unblinkered look at realities, as well as a reminder of why we are there at all. No one disputes that India got involved in Sri Lanka to help the Tamils realize their legitimate aspirations without allowing the country to be dismembered. We are not there to perpetuate Sinhalese domination or to implement an accord per se. But understandably, the Sinhalese are, and will remain, hostile to the IPKF presence on Sri Lanka soil. The Tamils, who had welcomed the IPKF as saviours, are now sulking and feel—all three million of them—that we have let them down. Indeed, if some of them hate our guts we can hardly fault them.

There may have been provocation enough from the LTTE for the Indian troops to hit back but this is no longer relevant. The fact is that our forces have been killing Tamils, destroying their homes, driving them away: a nice way to win their trust and get them justice. The only "achievement" we can claim since the July 29 accord was signed is the passage of the Provincial Councils Bill and the 13th amendment to the Sri Lanka Constitution. These fall far short of the main Tamil demands after Eelam was implicitly given up.

ILLUSORY

As Ashok Mitra's lucid analysis in these columns (December 29-30) showed, the devolutions proposed are largely illusory. Dr Mitra could also have mentioned another major demand relating to the vesting of State lands in the Provincial Councils which has also been ignored. The Colombo government is accused of using its ownership of land to bring in Sinhalese settlers and try to change the ethnic balance. So, less than fair legislation and wide spread damage to life and property—this sums up the Tamil gains from our diplomatic and military efforts.

The Prime Minister must have been badly briefed when he called the LTTE a small unrepresentative group. Actually, the LTTE is by far the largest group of Tamil militants which totally dominates the Northern Province and a good part of the Eastern Province. In the Jaffna peninsula it has for long been running a parallel, effective administration. Contrary to official claims, the LTTE still enjoys much popular support. The Tamils know that it was the LTTE that protected them from Sinhalese oppression and the Sinhalese army for years and will continue to do so after the Indian forces withdraw.

Despite the LTTE's ruthlessness—perhaps partly because of it—its writ still runs. It is idle to imagine that any election to the Provincial Council can successfully be held without the LTTE's support, no matter how many additional troops are iducted for the occasion. The moderate TULF appeals to no one, and other militant groups like TELO, PLOTE or EPRLF do not have anything like the absolute hold on Tamils that the LTTE has.

By all accounts the LTTE cadres were as well organized and, except for heavy weaponry, as well equipped as any infantry component of the Indian army. They are certainly better motivated. But they are also realist enough to realize that they are no match for the IPKF's 8-10 brigades. At the same time, the IPKF may crush the LTTE but can never hope to annihilate it, if counter-insurgency operations in our own north-eastern sector for decades are any guide. In a no-win situation, all that is needed is a face-saving formula (both sides have much more than face to lose) for starting a dialogue.

The unconditional surrender approach that the Indian Government has adopted towards the LTTE ignores the complexities of the situation on the ground and leaves no room for give-and take. Such an approach has rarely worked at any time in history, and will not work now. Moreover, on a long-term view it would be foolish to decimate the LTTE beyond a point. It is the only organized armed body that can hold on the Sinhalese onslaught after the IPKF pulls out, as it has to some day.

A country staggering under the economic effects of an unprecedented drought that spends more than Rs 3 crores a day on the operations in Sri Lanka hardly deserves a pat on the back. A stage has been reached when we are in danger of continuing to fight the LTTE for the sake of fighting or to satisfy our military ego. With a strange perversity, we will go on killing Tamils, and go on sacrificing precious Indian lives.

In fairness to ourselves, as to the Lanka Tamils, we must earnestly strive towards a ceasefire and a settlement to restore normalcy. And the time seems ripe for such an effort. There are reports that the LTTE's main conditions now are to lift the ban on their party in Sri Lanka, remove the price placed on Mr Pirabhakaran's head, and allow arms to be laid down in phases the minimum to be retained for personal protection. It appears they are no longer pressing the outrageous demand for Indian forces to withdraw to October 10 positions.

HERO WORSHIP

In Sri Lanka and in Tamil Nadu the Tamils have shown a strong trait of fierce hero worship. Dravidian culture apparently being fertile ground for the personality cult. In Mr Pirabhakaran today there is a single leader whom Sri Lanka Tamils need and obey. With the snapping of the MGR-Pirabhakaran link and the split in the AIADMK, Mr Pirabhakaran's role becomes crucial. Presumably he is at the top of the IPKF's hit list. But his death could plunge Tamil Sri Lanka into a chaotic situation resulting from intra-militant rivalries.

A negotiated solution can then be ruled out. There is risk also of the violence spreading in Tamil Nadu. Therefore, it would be wise to settle with the LTTE while Mr Pirabhakaran is still there. Then we could get on with the job we set out to do in the first instance—that of securing for the Sri Lankan Tamils a fair deal in their homeland.

R.K. Lakshman, Times of India, 17.1.88

The issue is human

OPINION

Kuldip Nayar

PERHAPS it happens to all issues that a state generally takes up: somewhere along the way the real purpose gets lost. We began in Sri Lanka as a party which was horrified over the treatment meted out to the Tamils there. Mrs Gandhi sent Narasimha Rao, the then foreign minister, after the riots in Colombo where Tamils were killed. Rajiv Gandhi air-dropped food in Jaffna even at the risk of staking international support.

For sometime now, the human aspect appears to have been pushed into the background and other factors, geo-political and regional, have come to the fore. The Prime Minister has justified the sending of the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) to Sri Lanka on the ground that "foreign elements" had to be prevented from threatening India's security.

It is well known by now that Trincomalee was sought to be pawned to America and there is no doubt that such a development would have posed a threat to India's security. Understandably, the Indo-Sri Lanka accord prohibits Colombo from inducting a third power in the harbour and the Sri Lanka waters. But the real purpose of the accord was neither to neutralise Trincomalee nor to keep away foreign elements like Pakistan and Israel which were helping Sri Lanka to suppress the Tamil aspirations.

The accord was meant to ensure, within Sri Lanka, a self-government to the Tamils in their majority areas so that they would escape the discrimination and dictation which had dogged them for many years. It was not a state-like status in India but the Tamils, by and large, accepted it to end the hostilities and lead a peaceful life. The question that New Delhi has to ask itself is how far its action has helped that process.

True, the situation would have been different if the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) had gone along with the Indian government in implementing the accord. But is LTTE alone to blame? The detention and the tragic death of two of LTTE's regional commanders and 10 senior members after general amnesty must have come as a rude shock to the LTTE. Thileepan, a LTTE leader, had to sacrifice his life, fasting to death, to get some concrete proposals for the setting up of an interim administration, which is still nowhere near implementation. President Jayewardene is a slippery customer and New Delhi must have known it by this time. He may be the best moderate India has in Sri Lanka but he is also a person who runs with the hare and hunts with the hound at the same time.

Unfortunately, New Delhi considers the ceasefire proposal as a "ploy" on the part of the LTTE to regroup its forces for subsequent operations. Presuming it is true, the risk has to be taken.

I picked up lot of evidence from the Sri Lankan Tamil groups in Madras about the Jayewardene government's contacts with the LTTE. There are about 200 LTTE activists in Colombo itself but the government has not touched them. Reports are that the LTTE has shifted its operations from Jaffna to Batticaloa, because the latter has a common border with the Sinhalese area. The LTTE men, after an ambush or a surprise attack, go over to the Sinhalese side to seek shelter.

On the other hand, the Sri Lanka government has already modified the accord unilaterally. The imposition of the emergency, whereby Colombo can take over the administration in Jaffna and other Tamil areas, has to follow the norms laid down in the Indian Constitution, that is, outside aggression, etc. The Jayewardene government has added "breakdown of essential services" as an additional ground for declaration of the emergency.

Residuary powers, after delinetating central and state subjects, have already been appropriated by Colombo. Those powers were to be vested in the proposed provincial council. Another point on which the accord has been altered is land, which has worried the Tamils most. The Sinhala colonisation in traditional Tamil majority areas in the guise of resettling Sinhala refugees has not stopped.

"We have pointed out to the Government of India that the accord has been violated both in letter and spirit even before the Tamils have been given any set up of their own," Amirthalingam, chief of the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) told me in Madras. "I have written a personal letter to Rajiv Gandhi so that the matter could be discussed when Jayewardene is in Delhi."

In the face of steps to dilute the accord, the basic problem of clothing the proposed provincial council with more powers has become difficult. The Sri Lanka Supreme Court has already said in a judgement that there will have to be a referendum to get the people's assent if additional powers are contemplated for the provincial council. The most important part financial decentralisation, was left for further discussions. New Delhi is now so dependent on Jayewardene that it may not make an issues of such things as may not be to his liking.

On the other hand, Jayewardene's authority to implement the accord, much less to go beyond it, is now a question mark. After the resignation of Ronnie de. Mel, the Sri Lankan finance minister, it is evident that the ruling United National Party (UNP) is not fully behind Jayewardene. De Mel's argument that the government, which has not gone in for elections for the past 10 years has no right to stay in power, has validity.

The demand for new elections is bound to get wider support from the Sinhalese, particularly when they have not relished the accord. Mrs Bandaranaike, who is waiting in the wings, has not only denounced the accord but has also joined hands with militant monks to pull down the UNP government and all that it has committed to do. Even JVC, a militant Sinhalese organisation, is soft towards her. Were elections to be held now, Mrs Bandaranaike's return to power is said to be more or less certain.

What strategy New Delhi will adopt in that eventuality is difficult to say. The accord will be as dead as a dodo if Jayewardene's successor is not in its favour. By then, the IPKF would

have destroyed most of LTTE's force and its hideouts.

Whom would the Tamils turn to for protection if the Sinhalese do not accept the calls of a pluralistic society, which Sri Lanka is? Surely, New Delhi does not intend to keep the IPKF in Jaffna, Batticaloa and other Tamil areas indefinitely. However, Amirthalingam says: "If Indian soldiers leave, it will be a betrayal of Tamils."

The best way out is still the accord, but its implementation has to be to the satisfaction of the Tamils. Even in his recent letter to Rajiv Gandhi, LTTE chief V. Prabhakaran, has reiterated the acceptance of "a regional Tamil state" and all that he wants is a "satisfactory devolution of power" to the proposed state. In other words, a state-like status within Sri Lanka is the goal of the militants and other Tamils. This is what New Delhi is also working for.

But if the hostilities continue, the negotiating parties will be distracted from the real purpose; how to implement the accord and transfer substantial powers to the proposed provincial council. Against this background, the proposal for a ceasefire should have top priority.

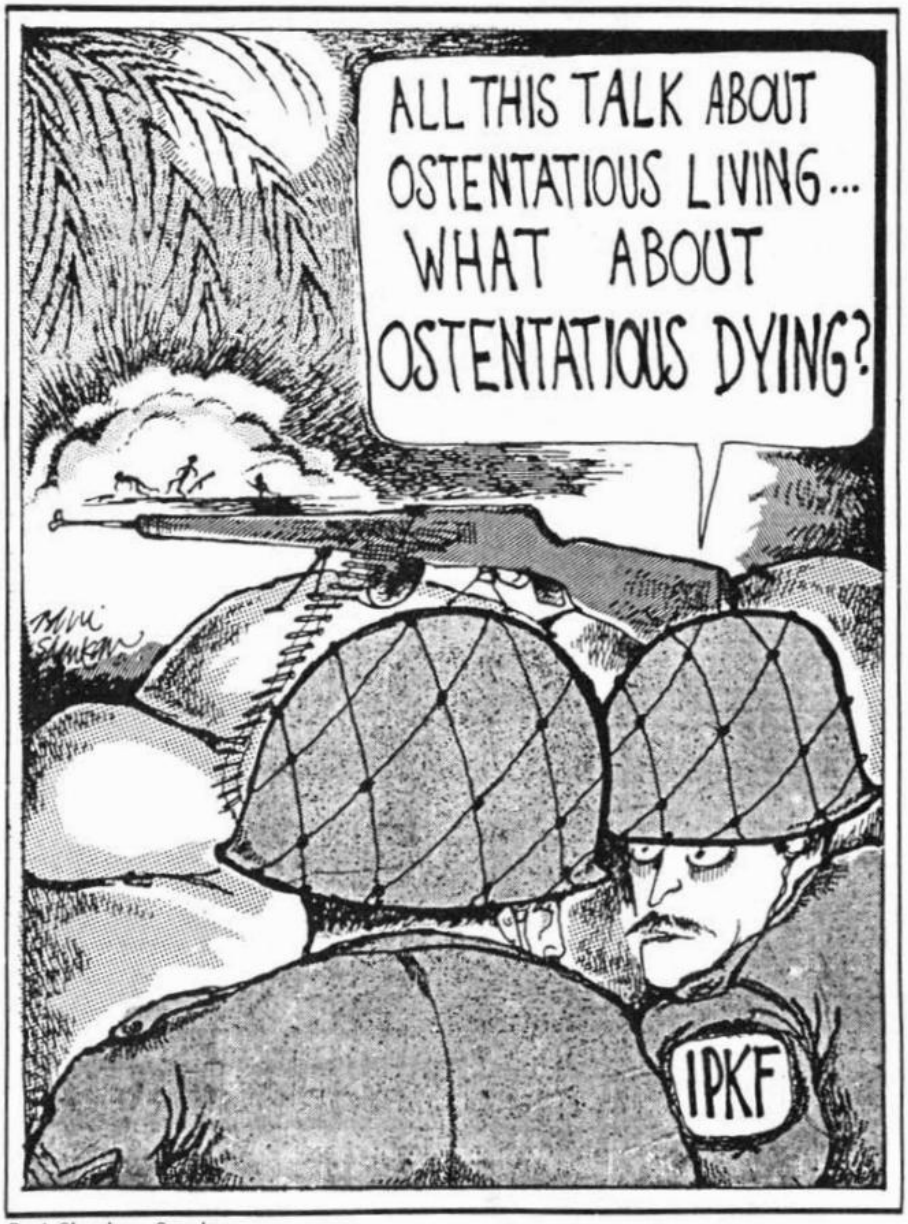
Prabhakaran's repeated requests for it — he sent a personal letter to Rajiv Gandhi early this month — have some merit. Unfortunately, New Delhi considers the ceasefire proposal as a "ploy" on the part of the LTTE to regroup its forces for subsequent operations. Presuming it is true, the risk has to be taken, keeping in view the situation where the LTTE has substantial sympathy among the Tamils.

The LTTE forces are not so powerful as to pose a challenge to the IPKF, which is already three-division strong. And all the overground Tamil groups ! met in Madras are unanimously behind the demand for a ceasefire.

It is peace which the Tamils in Sri Lanka have wanted and it is the peace which has eluded them again. The confrontation between the IPKF and the LTTE is distressing for them. In Madras I heard many stories which bring no credit to India. However exaggerated, most people in Tamil Nadu believe in them. Now there is no MGR to put a lid on Tamil's volatile feelings. There may be an outburst; the Tamils are known for their emotional reactions.

The issue is not whether the IPKF has succeeded in curbing the LTTE but whether the Sri Lanka Tamils have regained confidence to live in their traditional areas. It appears while totalling the number of LTTE militants killed and arms surrendered, New Delhi has forgotten the human side of the problem. Was not this the real issue when we started helping the Tamils? ■

30.1.88



Ravi Shankar, Sunday.

CIVILIANS □ KILLED

G. Rajadurai 1.1.88

S. Nagamani 21.1.88

V. Harishankar 2.2.88

Suthakaran 8.1.88

Y. Thaneswari 24.1.88

K.C. Jayendran 12.2.88

Viswanathan 7.1.88

T. Yoganathan 24.1.88

C. Raghunathan 12.2.88

Mrs. S. Annapillai 10.1.88

Panjalingam 25.1.88

Miss. Kalpana 21.2.88

Julian 14.1.88

S. Jayaratnam 26.1.88

K. Thillarajan 27.2.88

A. Thavamani 19.1.88

Swapadasundaram 27.1.88

A. Antony 26.2.88

EDITORIAL

AN UNHOLY WAR

Whom are the Indian armed forces fighting against and dying for in Sri Lanka, and for what? Why are the Tamils getting killed and tormented? Is this a war to establish a moral right or stake a principle? By whom? On whom ? On all accounts this is an unholy war. By taking on the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam without heed to Tamil feelings, their anxieties and fears, and with callous disregard to their safety and security, India today has waged a war against Tamils, not only of Sri Lanka but the world over.

By unleashing enormous brutality on the Tamil civilian population, India has forsaken its role as a protector of Tamils and guarantor of peace. Above all, the psychological trauma that has been inflicted on the Tamil population is so grave that its impact will endure for several years, if not for generations, to come.

A sense of deep shock and betrayal permeates through the minds of Tamils. Having suffered for many years under the repression of the Sinhalese Sri Lankan state and its armed forces, they stand condemned to suffer further deaths and destructions. Indians are today killing the same people whom they came to protect. A tragedy of immense proportions has fallen on a hapless people.

Until now New Delhi has rather deftly massaged and managed Tamil Nadu. Indian government, both by keeping the national and international media away from the Tamil areas and through its state-controlled radio and television network has so far with some measure of success orchestrated a propaganda of misinformation and disinformation.However, the truth is slowly emerging through various independent sources and numerous testimonies of eye-witnesses.

The political management of New Delhi and the operation of the Indian "peace-keeping" forces and their conduct in Sri Lanka have considerably tarnished India's image and standing in the world forum. The condemnation of India's military offensive at the recently held conference on Tamil refugees at Assemblee Nationale in Paris, attended by representatives of thirty two non-governmental organisations from Europe, Canada and USA is indicative of this. Many governments, too, have expressed concern privately.

The Sri Lankan state by its indifference to the happenings in the Northern and Eastern provinces, despite several appeals made even by its own civil administrators over there, has abdicated its own responsibility, forfeited its right to govern the Tamil areas in Sri Lanka and conceded its sovereignty over them.

Why is this war still continued ?; a war where there can be no victors and glory to none. Then, is this to preserve the faltering prestige of a politician or a lost pride of a General? It is said that war is a serious matter to be left to the Generals alone. This equally applies to politics and politicians. New Delhi may have designs to set up "stooges and puppets." There are Tamil quislings and hirelings who will very readily render their services. Such measures will never bring lasting solutions to deep rooted political conflicts. India must cease its military offensive against the Tamil Tigers, and work out a political arrangement with their participation to meet the legitimate aspirations of the Tamils, in line with what the Tamils unanimously insisted on in Bhutan.

Sri Lanka may be Rajiv Gandhi's waterloo, but it should not be India's Vietnam. A war that has no justification should be soon brought to an end.A peoples' wish to live in freedom with dignity and honour should be respected. Truth and justice would ultimately prevail. India and Indians must re-awake before it is too late to preserve the image and integrity of modern India, so assiduously nurtured over the decades by her founding fathers and their successors.

YOU TOO INDIA?

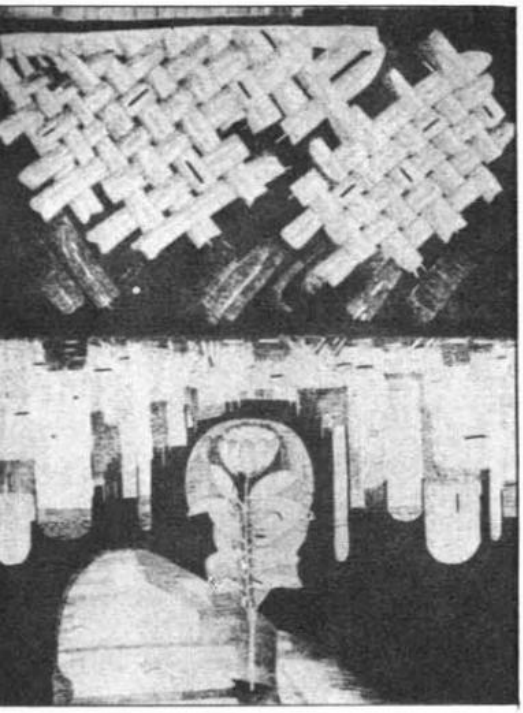
நிச்சயமற்றுப் போயின
நம் இரவுகள்,
அன்பே!
படுக்கைக்குப் போகுமுன்
இறுதி அர்த்தங்களுடன்
பார்த்துக்கொள்வோம்!

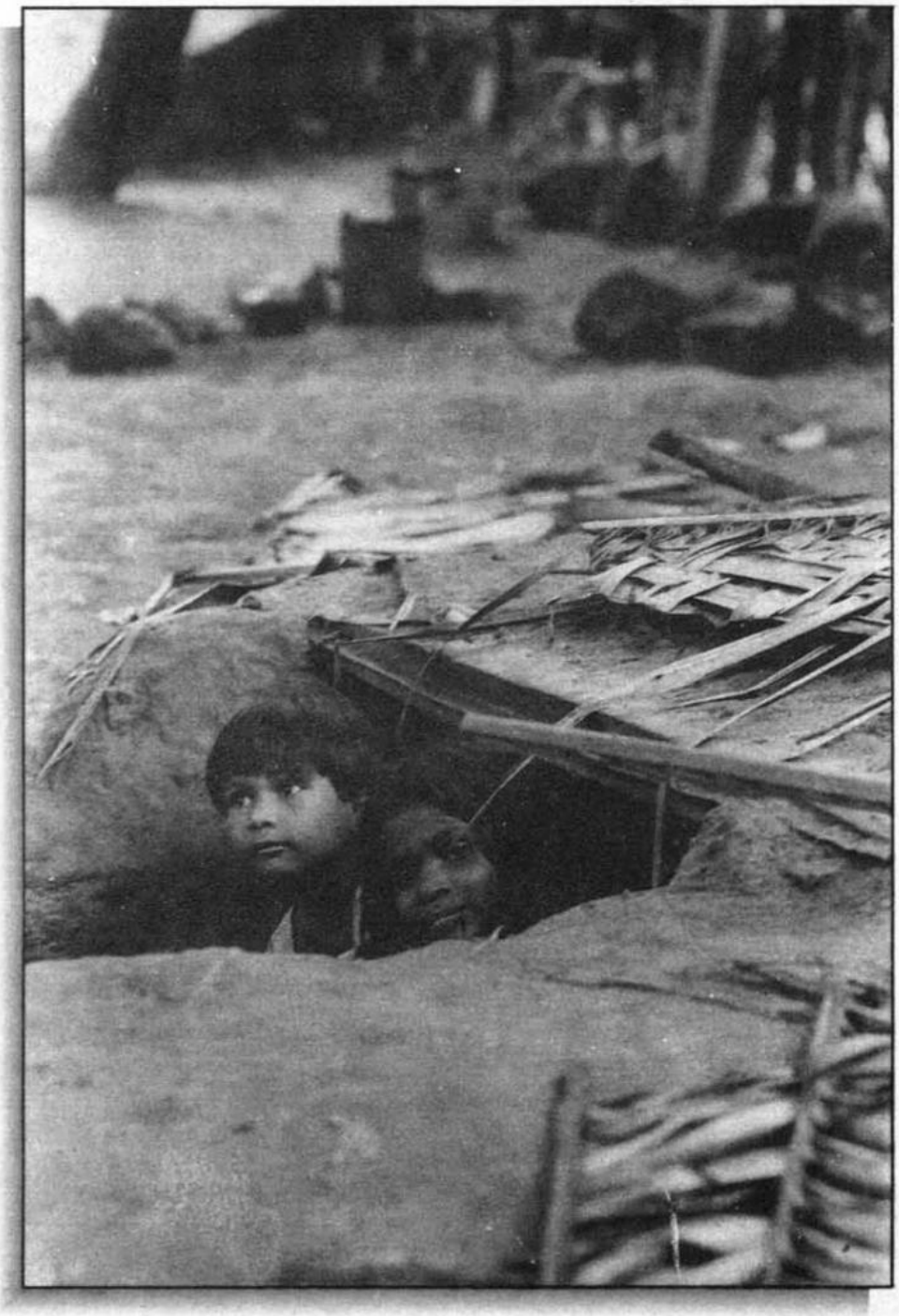
குழந்தைகளின் கண்களில்
அழுத்தமாக உன் உதடுகளை
ஒரு முறை பதித்து வை.

அப்புறமாய்,
நம் உறவுகளை
ஒரு முறை நினைத்துக் கொள்வோம்!

இறுதியாக
மாறி, மாறி
நம் கண்ணீர்த்துளிகளை
நாமே துடைத்துக் கொள்வோம்!

இந்த இரவில்
நாம் எரியாதிருந்தால்
விடியலில்.....





மூடப்பட்ட கதவு முகப்பில்,
இருளில்,
திசை தெரியாது
மோதி மோதிச் செட்டையடிக்கிற
புழுக்களை.

தாங்கும் வலுவை என்
இதயம் இழந்தது.

OPERATION PAWAN

In a Rush to Vanquish

COMMENT

If there had been less political haste, victory could have been easier

FOR the victorious Indian battalions that captured Jaffna in October, it is now time to write the war diaries and draw lessons. To compile its own diary of what became the country's longest war, INDIA TODAY *assigned Special Correspondent* SHEKHAR GUPTA *to visit the battlefields and interview scores of Indian soldiers, from generals in Delhi to the jawans who fought in Jaffna's jungle of concrete and who now, with their morale high, are policing the peace. His report:*

THE Indian Army had never seen a war like this: in an alien land, against a foreign enemy that wore no uniforms, knew no Geneva Convention on ethics of war, yet carried deadly modern weapons and fought routinely from behind the cover of women and children. And the war itself was a sudden turnaround to fight an enemy who, regarded as friend till recently, was set on the fratricidal course, forced by its folly and bloodthirst.

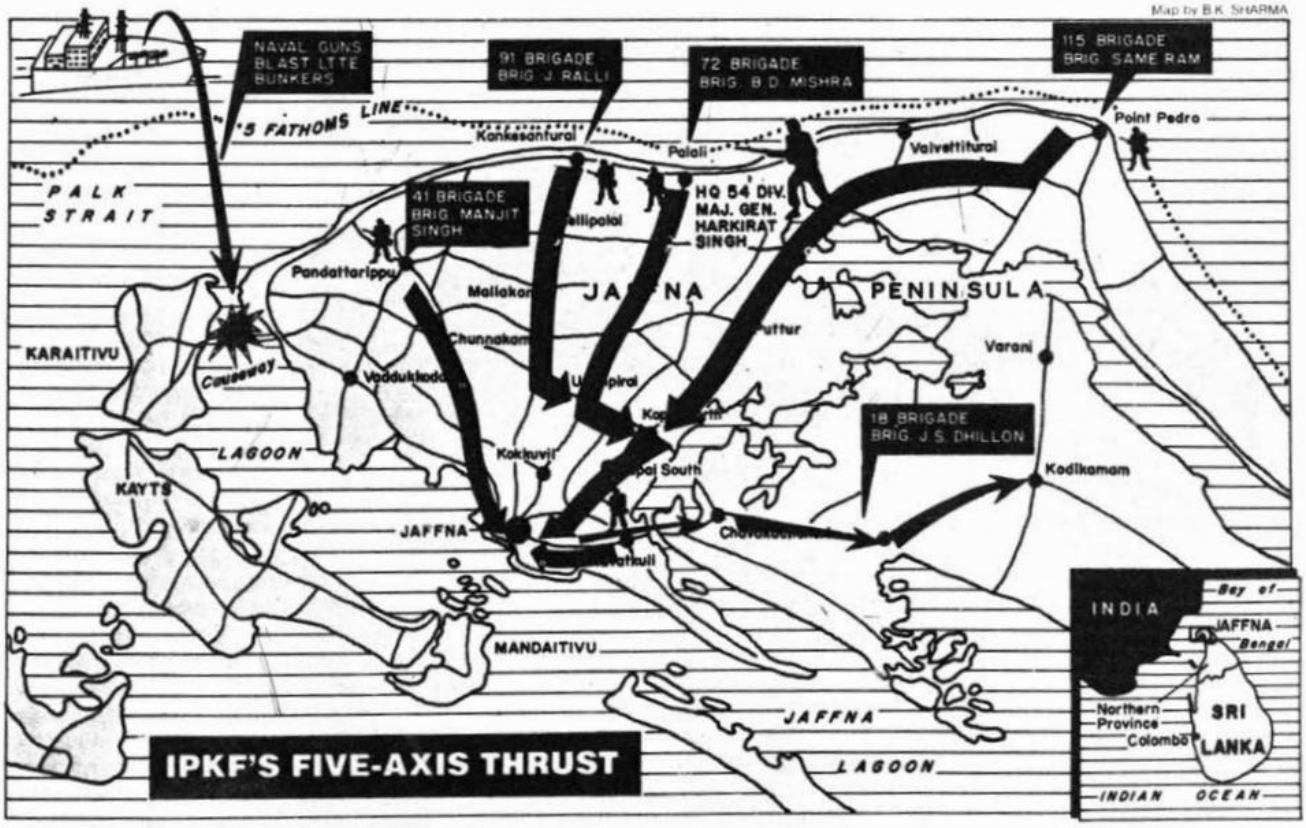
Tensions between the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) had been mounting since early September. First the LTTE accused India of failing to retrieve from Sri Lankan custody 17 of its men who swallowed cyanide rather than go to Colombo. The LTTE responded with frenzied killings of Sinhalas and political opponents. The IPKF reacted in a limited way, but events gathered momentum on their own. On October 8, the LTTE kidnapped five unsuspecting paracommandos on their way to collect provisions and killed them insanely, putting burning tyres round their necks in public. Next they ambushed a CRPF patrol. New Delhi wanted a quick end to the trouble and on October 11, the army launched a five-pronged offensive to wrest Jaffna.*(see sketch).*

> **On the positive side, the jawans showed an awesome ability to advance despite heavy casualties.**

If the strategic gains in the operation were considerable (INDIA TODAY, December 15, 1987) the casualties were high: over 350 killed and 1,100 wounded which, at nearly 7 per cent of the men who fought, is almost twice as high as the rate in the wars against Pakistan. On the positive side, the jawans showed an awesome ability to advance despite heavy casualties.

The army says it fought with hopeless intelligence on the LTTE's manpower, firepower and motivation. "And tactical intelligence on LTTE hideouts was a cipher," says a senior general. Many officers feel that if the Government had given them 48 hours more, the passage to Jaffna may have been much smoother. The haste of decision makers in the

Map by B.K. SHARMA



Photographs by SHEKHAR GUPTA

IPKF patrols Jaffna: costly victory

capital that resulted in the embarrassing spectacle of four brigades being pinned down on their way to Jaffna. And if the politicians were in a rush, the army brass also acquiesced. Consequently, most of the units launched on October 11 were understaffed, underequipped, underbriefed and tired even before the first shot was fired. Consider the following:

Most of the units launched on October 11 were understaffed, underequipped, underbriefed and tired.

► Many units had been moved to Sri Lanka on October 11 itself and launched into battle within hours. Two of the battalions, 4/5 Gorkhas and 13 Sikh Light Infantry (LI)—which suffered more than 110 casualties between them—had landed only hours before being sent to Jaffna. In August, the 13 Sikh LI troops were airlifted to Bangalore for the onward move to Jaffna. But on October 7 they were sent back to Gwalior. The next day they were again asked to pack up. Finally, they landed at Jaffna on October 11 after a tiring journey, several transit halts and sleepless nights, to be flung into a strange war on foreign soil. Similarly, the 41 Brigade was airlifted on October 17 and launched straight on the coastal road axis leading to Jaffna Fort (*see sketch*). The brigade had 272 casualties, nearly 17 per cent of its strength in Sri Lanka.

Temple destroyed in fighting: battle-scarred city

► When the battle began, the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) had just six artillery guns and three T-72 tanks in Jaffna. Says an officer: "Normally one battalion is backed by 200 guns to soften the enemy. Here we had only six for 20." In fact, while the tactical headquarters of the 54th Infantry Division—specially designated for air and amphibious assault—had moved to Palaly, the heavy weapons were left behind as unnecessary. And after the action began the firepower was built up painfully: each giant Il-76 jet landed with one T-72 tank or two BMP armoured fighting vehicles. The jetty at Kankesanthurai port was too weak for the armour to land by ships. Thus for the first few days the Indian firepower was about the same as the LTTE's.

► Troops often ran short of ammunition because when they were launched into assault, they never expected to fight for so many days at a stretch. Due to ambushes, it was difficult to send ammunition by road and helicopters braved machine-gun fire to resupply the troops. Near Navatkuli, a Mahar battalion had the mortification of seeing its ammunition dropped outside the area it controlled. They had to fight their way out of the LTTE encirclement to retrieve it. Helicopters had also to drop cooked food packets for them.

► Ammunition for tanks and attack helicopters was also short. Besides, many lives were lost due to the delay in using helicopter gunships. What should have been a tactical decision awaited political approval for 16 hours. Once cleared, the choppers proved a point. Chavakachheri was taken by two Madras Regiment battalions at the cost of only three lives, after helicopters fired just 32 rockets. "But for the helicopters, we were resigned to at least 100 casualties in the heavily defended town," says an officer.

Moreover, the units fell short of officers as LTTE snipers picked them out. And once the officer was killed or wounded, the junior commissioned officers and other ranks often lost initiative. The agony of just one battalion illustrates this.

The 4/5 Gorkhas are a legend. They collected battle honours in Jammu's Rajouri sector in 1965, capturing the strategic Topa post with less than 30 casualties. In 1971 they did better, with battle honours for Ghazipur, Atgram and Sylhet where they were landed by helicopters and fought for eight days on their own. They collected two Mahavir Chakras, two Vir Chakras and other decorations. The total casualties then were 28. But the tally in Jaffna is a disastrous 70.

As a part of the 72 Brigade, the battalion was supposed to move towards Jaffna and link up with the troops landed by helicopters in the university campus. From the campus, it followed the convoy of tanks with the paracommandos they had rescued (*see box*). But while the tanks had safe passage, the Gorkhas bringing up the rear came under sudden fire from four temples dominating the main road-crossing in Urumparai. The battalion adjutant, a tough Manipuri, Major N.J.D. Singh was hit on the head and he died instantly. Another company commander, Major Anil Deepak Gardner, had the entire flesh from his leg blown off by a Claymore mine. Major A.A. Verghese, the other company commander and the only Tamil speaker in the unit, went into a house full of crying women and children to comfort them, but was shot in the back by an old woman.

Then disaster struck when the commandant, Lt-Colonel I.B.S. Bawa, was shot just under his heart. He was removed along with the other wounded to a dried-up well—the battalion's only cover—where a lone doctor struggled to save him.

COMMANDO ASSAULT

The Lost Offensive

A look down from the glazed cockpit of the IAF's *Chetak* helicopter tells more than the hundreds of rumours about what happened to the commando operation to capture the LTTE leadership on the evening of October 11 that brought, instead of quick, surgical success, a bloody disaster.

On a cityscape packed with the red and green of palm trees and tiled roofs, two open patches, an oval football field and a smaller playground, stand out. No commander could have ignored them. Particularly since the IPKF had often picked up LTTE leaders for talks from buildings in the same area.

The football pitch offered a larger opening with fewer built-up areas around it and was selected as the drop zone. The troops were to land by Mi-8 helicopters for a lightning operation to prise out the LTTE headquarters. No parachutes were to be used.

A company (about 70 men) of the 10 Paracommando battalion was to land first and secure the pitch. A second wave of choppers was to follow, with a company of 13 Sikh Light Infantry (LI), flown in just a few hours earlier from Gwalior, to build on the paracommandos' foothold. If things had gone right, the main bodies of troops would then have linked up by land with these heliborne pioneers and finished the LTTE.

But the choppers had just begun to disgorge the paracommandos when they came under fire, some of it from high calibre (up to .5 inch) machine-guns. "They had everything right: range, position, and above all their appreciation of the situation. They knew this was their most crucial battle," said an officer.

For two months now, analysts are trying to figure out how the LTTE was able to pre-empt effectively what was meant to be a surprise attack. It is now believed that the Tigers intercepted the army's radio communication on the plans for the night. "Till then our estimation of their communication equipment was even poorer than our appreciation of their firepower and motivation," says a senior officer.

For the commandos it was a baptism by fire as they searched the nearby buildings for the LTTE leaders who had already escaped. Six commandos were killed and nine were wounded.

Worse followed and that is the most painful untold story of the battle of Jaffna. In the dark of the night and under heavy machine-gun fire, the helicopters bringing the 30-strong platoon of Sikh LI landed in the other, smaller playground. This area was barely a few hundred yards away but was separated by several lanes of buildings, each a booby-trapped snakepit of the Tamil Tigers' defenders (*see sketch*).

The doughty *mazhabi* Sikhs found

SIKH LIGHT INFANTRY TROOPS LANDED HERE
LTTE TACTICAL HEADQUARTERS
TANKS ARRIVE ON RAILWAY LINE FOR RESCUE
PARACOMMANDOS DROPPED HERE
FOOTBALL FIELD

While the doctor survived with a grazing wound, helicopters, deterred by machine-gun fire, failed to pick up Bawa. He died at 4.30 p.m., just as rescue came with tanks, six hours after he was hit. Second-in-command Randhir Singh, the only surviving major, took over the battalion which was unfit to fight till new officers could be flown in from India.

Elsewhere too the LTTE systematically picked out officers. A mine blew to bits the BMP that the deputy commander of the 72 Brigade, Colonel D.S. Saraon was riding, killing him and the entire complement of nine men. Snipers also shot dead Major A.K. Chaturvedi of 5 Rajput and Lieutenant R.S. Nagar, whose ambitions of following in a proud tradition—his father too had commanded the 16th Sikh battalion—were cut short. Major R.S. Kanwa, an artillery regiment's doctor, was also shot down by snipers.

Often, the officer's death held up the troops. Top sources in South Block confirm that the ratio of officers to the men of other ranks killed in Sri Lanka is an all-time high. In the 1965 and 1971 wars with Pakistan, the ratio was 1:9.3 and 1:9.8 respectively. Here it is 1:7.5. This was partly because the officers led from the front and partly because the LTTE snipers, hidden behind windows or on the Chinese-made sniper chairs strung on palm trees, always looked for the officers, often through telescopic gunsights. A vital lesson the army has learnt now is to mix its officers with troops by avoiding pips of rank, wearing slouch hats and carrying oversized back-packs.

Jaffna raises other vital questions. Why, for example, were whole battalions pinned down by snipers? Officers confess it was often because they forgot the basic exercise of "moving on one leg". Routinely, advancing units make a section

Photographs by SHEKHAR GUPTA

Bits of Sikh LI uniforms at the battlefield: trapped

something was amiss as they landed right on top of the LTTE battlements. Bullets rained on them and three helicopters were hit. The pilots barely managed to nurse their limping machines back to Palaly and brought the grim news: the platoon was likely to be wiped out, as would reinforcements. The commanders made the devil's choice: leaving the platoon to its own fate.

But for the platoon and its young commander, Major Birendra Singh, the scion of a well-known political family in Bharatpur and a relative of Minister of State for External Affairs K. Natwar Singh, fate was hopelessly cruel. It seems that his radioman was one of the first to be hit, breaking his contact with Palaly. He could reach the paracommandos only on short-range walkie-talkies.

But while the commandos asked him to join he, like a good infantryman, waited for the rest of his company. He did not know it was not coming. And by the time he did, he was encircled.

The first assault came at dawn. And though the troops fought valiantly, each assault left them with less men and bullets. At 11.30 a.m. on October 12, with the last bullet fired, the troops led a bayonet charge. They were cut down to the last man but one, Sepoy Gora Singh: he was taken prisoner and later released by the LTTE. It is his account that details the story of one of the most poignant battles in the history of the Indian Army.

For the LTTE, besides a morale-boosting success, this also brought all the platoon's weapons, uniforms and equipment. The bare bodies of the troops were left on public display in the nearby Nagaraja Vihar temple and then burnt with just a barrel of oil poured over the whole heap. The evidence of the crazy plunder still lies scattered in a nearby building, a former LTTE stronghold. Pieces of the Sikh LI's battle-fatigues, cross-belts, boots, water-bottles and epaulettes still lie mixed with thousands of empty .50-inch machine-gun shells.

Even as the Sikh LI fought their last battle, a major rescue operation was on to retrieve the commandos. Lieutenant Colonel Dalbir Singh, commandant of the paracommando battalion, led the mission himself with the help of three T-72 tanks which, at that time, were all the tanks the IPKF had in Sri Lanka. The roads were hopelessly booby-trapped. So the commander of the tank troupe, Major Anil Kaul, whose father had first raised the regiment (65 Cavalry) decided on an innovation: to drive tanks on the Palaly-Jaffna railway line which passed right next to the campus. Kaul himself was hit by machine-gun fire in his eye and right arm as he merely peeped out to find his way to the railway line.

But his men put him on morphine and fought their way to the campus. And by the time the tanks and paracommandos broke out of the encirclement, two other infantry battalions, the 4/5 Gorkhas and the main body of 13 Sikh LI, had linked up as well.

The paracommandos perhaps survived total disaster thanks to their better training. They conserved ammunition, took cover in the buildings and even succeeded in picking up all of their dead, wounded and the weapons. But even now they talk about the operation with palpable pain. "For those 18 hours we just prayed and fought. Everything hung by a slender thread," said an officer. How grave the situation was is evident from the fact that directing the rescue operation was none other than Major General Harkirat Singh himself. He was aboard a *Chetak* helicopter that flew so low as to have a machine-gun bullet go clean through the three-inch space between the seats to which the pilot and the general were harnessed.

The night is now an inseparable part of military history. It has also left painful memories for the desperate men close to the action, particularly the remaining men of 13 Sikh LI, who will now hold special *ardas* and *akhand path* on October 12 every year, to remember their 30 lonely and gutsy comrades on the killing fields of Jaffna University.

—SHEKHAR GUPTA in Jaffna

(about 10 to 15 men) move forward while another gives it cover. When the advancing section reaches the limit of its protectors' firing range, it takes cover and gives protection to the first one which then advances. In Jaffna this wasn't always done. Instead, as the units got bogged down and Delhi pressed for results, more troops were flung into the furnace.

Another lesson was the ineffectiveness of armour in built-up, mined areas. The LTTE used their Chinese rocket-propelled grenade launchers (RPGS) effectively at close range. "They even attacked tanks with burning jerry cans full of petrol," says the division commander, Major General Harkirat Singh.

The LTTE learnt from wherever it could. The army recovered, besides arms and cyanide jars, video-cassettes of the Anthony Quinn classic, *Omar Mokhtar: The Lion of the Desert*, in which Libyan guerrillas hold up Italian tanks using mines and burning benzene cans. The LTTE had even defaced the milestones around the city, to confuse the army. Further, the army learnt that its heavier 7.62 mm rifle is no match for the Kalashnikov AK-47s in close quarter battle. It fires a shot at a time, not bursts.

For the future, however, the army has to learn the most from the Tigers' expertise in mine warfare which accounted for more than 60 per cent of all Indian casualties. For many years while they awaited the Sri Lankan offensive, the LTTE had been laying a network of ingenious mines on approaches to Jaffna. Unlike conventional metallic mines these were heaps of explosive filled in plastic jerry cans. Says a general: "They used anything non-metallic, even the hollow coconut tree trunks as casing for explosives." These were connected with wires that could be hanging innocuously in any house up to a kilometre away. The Tigers kept a map of the mines and joined the wires whenever a good target passed by. "Some mines had up to 200 kg of explosives which is a kiloton of explosive power," says an officer, underlining the fact that Hiroshima had been obliterated by a 20-kiloton nuclear bomb.

The impact of these mines was devastating. Along the roads even now one finds twisted bits of metal that once belonged to army vehicles. Bodies were rarely found after a mine blast. A 45-tonne T-72 literally exploded into pieces as the mine set off a concussion that blasted the ammunition inside the tank. Its turret, weighing more than 12 tonnes, jumped 15 ft. Colonel Saraon's BMP, weighing 20 tonnes, jumped 30 ft and its doors, weighing more than 250 kg each, were found more than a hundred yards away. Harassed, the army stopped power supply in the peninsula to counter the mine-menace. And when power was restored on December 24, a truck of 5 Paras was promptly blown up along with six jawans near Chavakachcheri.

The LTTE had a few surprises in its bag, from sniper chairs to the defacing of milestones to confuse any advancing army.

But now that the army has paid its price it is also wiser. If it needs to stop tanks in a war with Pakistan some of the approaches will indeed be protected with such undetectable mines. "No one has learnt more from Jaffna than us. This was our first real lesson in FIBUA (Fighting in built-up areas)," says a senior officer. A team of experts led by Brigadier Ravi Eipe from the College of Combat at Mhow is already in Jaffna to analyse the battle.

The army is also experimenting. Jaffna has given them an ideal opportunity to try out tactics. And almost the entire range of modern equipment is on trial—electronic warfare to attack helicopters, and from T-72 tanks to the Maruti Gypsy jeep, a trial model of which Major General Harkirat Singh rides.

As Singh points out, the campaign has had many firsts. It was the first time that the army, navy and air force launched joint operations; the first time India used helicopter gunships in actual combat; and also the first time that guns from a navy ship were fired in support of land operations—to blast the LTTE bunkers that held up a paracommandos squad on the causeway linking Jaffna with Karaitivu island (*see sketch*). This was also the first use of the naval Landing Ship Transports to put armour directly in combat. And vitally for India, the T-72 tank, which is its mainstay against Pakistan, was exposed to RPG fire. "Now we know where the tank is strong and where weak," says a general.

Also on the positive side, the Indian Air Force (IAF) displayed an awesome airlift capability in managing what is now considered the largest post-World War II airborne operation. The IAF and Indian Airlines flew a total of 4,100 transport sorties in just a fortnight to maintain the Jaffna-Madras air bridge. The taxi tracks at Jaffna and the air strip at Vavuniya caved in under the weight of the effort.

Now that the pace in Sri Lanka has relaxed other experiments are on. Electronic aids are being used to bug LTTE communication and Jaguars have been used on photo-reconnaissance missions. But more than anything else, the Indian defence machinery is learning the all-important lesson of not taking any motivated and reasonably well-armed adversary lightly. For, as the soldiers themselves say, if God made men, Kalashnikov made them equal.

JANUARY 31, 1988

AFFIDAVIT

Mrs. THANAPAKIYALECHUMY RASATHURAI (46) Vavini Lane, Valvettiturai.

On 1.1.88 my husband left home on his push cycle at about 10.00 a.m. to purchase food provisions.

While he was returning home, a batch of Indian soldiers numbering over 50 came in the opposite direction leading a militant arrested by them.

The moving soldiers kept on firing in the air.

My husband who was riding his push cycle was hit by a bullet on his left chest, making its exit from his right back.

He fell dead on the spot.

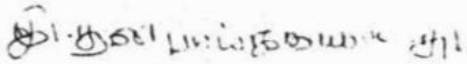
The soldiers went their way without paying any heed or attention on the deceased who was lying on the road.

On receipt of information my relatives went to the spot and brought the dead body home.

The funeral took place on the same day and his body was cremated at the Oorani Crematorium at Valvettiturai at about 4.00 p.m. on 1.1.88.

My husband was 46 years old and was a Government Clerk wh ; was on interdiction from service.

All my three children are school-going.



Mrs. THIRULOGANAYAGI POOLOGARAJAH (27) Kadduvan-South, Tellippallai.

My husband Mr. Poologasingam Poologarajah, aged 29 years Trader, was staying just in front of my house on 01.01.1988.

On 01.01.1988 at about 6.00 p.m. some IPKF personnel were moving and passing by the road, just in front of our house at Kadduvan-South, Tellippallai.

At that time, that is at 6.00 p.m. my husband was shot dead by the IPKF army personnel.

I have 2 small children and my husband was the sole breadwinner to our family.

Due to his death, we all are now living in utter poverty; and there is no one to support us.

P. Thirulogunayahi

Mrs. KANTHASAMY ALAKESWARI Verapatherar Kovilady, Alvai North, Alvai.

During the Army Operation at Puthukudierappu Area on 4.1.1988. My husband Sinnathamby Kanthasamy, (51) died by the result of gun shot injury by the IPKF and died at the spot.

I am the wife of Late Sinnathampy Kanthasamy. I am with a son in the age of 12 and my husband was the sole bread winner of my family.

Without the earning of my husband now we are without any income

RAJESWARY, Urany, Kankesanturai, (53)

I am the wife of the late, Augustine Pakkiyanathar of Urany, Kankesanturai.

My husband was a deep-sea fisherman.

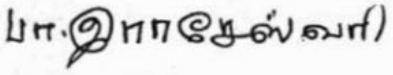
My husband set out fishing in his boat, fitted with an outboard motor.

While fishing, my husband had been assaulted by the naval personnels, with rifle butts, cut of 15 pieces of "Soodai" nets and removed away the outboard motor.

My husband returned home, with the help of an oar with severe injuries.

My husband succumbed to the injuries on the following day 04.01.88

Due to abnormal condition in the area, neither a complaint to the Police nor an inquest held.



SHUDAMANY KATPUKKARASI the widow of Sellan Shudamany, Udupiddy Road, Thondaimanaru.

I am the legal wife of Sellan Shudamany of Udupiddy Road, Thondaimanaru.

My husband died of shelling on 5th January 1988 at Veemankamam while he was returning home from the School.

My husband was a teacher and he was the bread winner of my family comprises two members. By the untimely death of my husband my nine year old son and I are undergoing unbearable hardships and agony.

MURUGESU NAGARATNAM (50) Urumpirai North, Urumpirai.

The deceased Villavarajah Vimalarani, aged 30 years, widow was my daughter.

On 6.1.88 at about 11.45 a.m. I heard gun shot outside my house.

I went out and found my daughter's dead body lying outside my house.

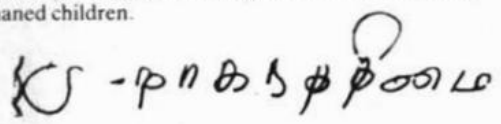
There was a gunshot wound on her head.

Her body was cremated at Urumpirai cemetery on the same day.

My daughter's husband died five years ago.

My daughter orphaned three children.

My husband is an invalid and I do not have any income to look after my daughter's orphaned children.



SUNTHARALINGAM KANMANY (32) 4, Mandaithevu.

The deceased Kanapathipillai Suntharalingam (32) was my husband.

He was a fisherman.

On 5.1.88 my husband left for Mannar where he hoped to engage in fishing.

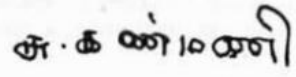
On 15.1.88 I was informed that my husband was killed on 8.1.88 when his boat was sunk by the Navy gun boats.

On hearing the news I went to Mannar.

His body was not recovered and I do not know what happened to it afterwards.

I have five children.

After my husband's death we do not have any income and undergoing untold hardships.



CONFRONTATION

1

COLOMBO, Jan. 1

The New Year dawned in Sri Lanka with bomb blasts, communal killings, and violence by southern subversive elements, leaving at least 41 people dead and over 80 injured in eastern Trincomalee and Batticaloa as well as in the central town of Kandy, according to authoritative sources.

Unconfirmed reports, however, put the toll at over 70 and more than 170 wounded during the past two days.

In a grisly midnight attack on a Sinhalese settlement in the remote Mahadivulwewa village under Morawewa police station in Trincomalee, LTTE militants shot dead 10 persons while they were asleep. Nine others were injured and 15 houses State set ablaze. The dead included three boys, one girl and a woman besides four men.

An Indian High Commission source put the toll at 25 in the clashes between the LTTE and a Muslim fundamentalist group in Kattankudy village, in Batticaloa town.

The source said Indian troops sent to the village yesterday to quell the fighting had found 25 bodies up to noon today.

The LTTE had claimed in a statement on Thursday that it had killed 30 members of the Muslim fundamentalist group, 'Jehad'.

In an encounter with the IPKF, an LTTE cadre Mathi was killed. While fishing in the Mankeni sea, a father and son were shot by Indian Navy. The boat drowned; they managed to swim to shore with bleeding wounds. The son succumbed to his wounds.

2

At Navalady IPKF ambushed LTTE men. In the ensuing battle two IPKF soliders were killed.

An IPKF Truck ran into a landmine set by LTTE. 5 lost their lives and many injured.

Indian helicopters strafed a civilians lorry going towards Oddusuddan last night. 6 died in the lorry. Ironically two of the dead were IPKF infantry men having a lift in the lorry.

3

COLOMBO, Jan. 3.

The Indian Peace Keeping Force is seeking the cooperation of Muslims in its campaign against LTTE militants in Eastern Sri Lanka where clashes between the militants and Muslim fundamentalists have left at least 25 dead, a Sri Lankan Government spokesperson said here today.

Five Sinhalese killed: Five more civilians, stated to be Sinhalese, were gunned down by alleged "Tamil militants" at Kuriniyakulam in Eastern Trincomalee district on Saturday, reports here said today. The victims were said to have been "dragged out of their homes and shot in front of other members of their families."

This followed the murder of 10 Sinhalese people by LTTE militants at Madiwulwewa village in Trincomalee at Thursday night. Nine were injured during the massacre at Madiwulwewa where over 15 shops were set ablaze.

The national news agency Lankapuvath, reporting on the Kuriniyakulam incident, however, said three Sinhalese civilians were shot dead and two wounded, when the LTTE militants raided the village. Three houses were burnt, it added.

The published reports said additional Indian troops were rushed to more areas of the Eastern Province to prevent such attacks.

Meanwhile, the independent English daily *'Island'* reported that 40 civilians had so far been killed and 10,000 rendered homeless or badly affected at Kattankudy in Eastern Batticaloa district in three days of armed clashes since Wednesday between the LTTE and the fundamentalist Muslim group "Jehad".

Quoting the Government agent (District Magistrate) of Batticaloa, Mr. K. Selvaratnam, the daily said of the killed, 34 were reported to be Muslims and the remaining Tamils.

In a land mine explosion near Kilavankulam 9 IPKF men in a jeep were killed on the spot. In the evening at Pudukudiyiruppu 5 IPKF men were killed and 5 injured in an encounter.

4

Colombo, Jan. 4 (PTI): The Indian Navy patrol craft fired at and sank three more vessels of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), carrying arms eastward from Jaffna peninsula on Saturday night, the state-owned *Daily News* said today.

The daily said the LTTE vessels, whose crew ignored Indian Navy signals to halt and identify themselves, attempted to slip out. They were sunk with all on board, it added.

According to official sources, each boat was manned by at least seven armed men. Bodies found later left no doubt that the dead were "hard core terrorists," the newspaper said.

The destination of the vessels, which appeared to be leaving the western coast of the peninsula, could have been either the northern or northeastern coasts, or the Eastern province, the daily said quoting officials.

This was the second sinking of LTTE boats by the Indian Navy in the past four days. Three days ago, five vessels belonging to the militants were fired upon the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) helicopters off the coast at Kathankudy in eastern Batticaloa, causing them to capsize with all the crew on board.

Meanwhile, the LTTE "terrorists" on Saturday burnt seven government buses at Kankesanthurai town in Jaffna peninsula.

THEY CAME WITH FOOD IN ONE HAND AND A GUN IN THE OTHER

LETTER

SIVA MUTTULINGASAMY, Surrey:

Contrary to the popular belief that the Indians were caught up in an unexpected fight with the TIGERS and during the conflict thousands of civilians were killed and many more displaced from their homes, it is now very evident that the Indians were out to destroy the Tigers and everything and everyone that came in between, from the very beginning. This so called peace accord was put together by two of the world's most desperate men, one senile and the other wet behind the ears. The Indians came as friends but for the slightest provocation they turned their guns on the very people they came to protect. India had accepted the Tigers as the sole representatives of the Eelam Tamil people on many occasions. They now call the Tigers the enemy of the Tamils and of the Indians.

This betrays an opportunistic mentality, not that of a regional superpower. It is no wonder why the North of India has always been invaded by foreigners when they so effortlessly betray their friends.

India has no right, morally or legally, to even touch one civilian Tamil. In Northern Ireland the British troops do not go on the rampage killing Irish civilians every time a soldier is killed by the IRA. This is how a superpower should behave, with tact and restraint and showing regard to civilian lives. Some may say this is too much to ask from a country like India with 80 percent illiteracy. I would say to India, 'Do not try to assume a superpower role in this region or anywhere for that matter till you have put your own house in order — in the Punjab, Assam, Nagaland, Mizoram, Tripura etc'.

LTTE □ STATEMENT

Mr Prabhakaran,the LTTE leader in his appeal to Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi dated January 13 states:

'In view of the continuing violence, disruption of peace in Tamil areas and the immense sufferings placed on our people, I appeal to you once again to call off the military offensive operation and initiate peace negotiations to end all hostilities and to establish peace and normalcy.

It is our considered opinion, and that of the people of Tamil Eelam, that a cessation of hostilities and the withdrawal of Peace Keeping forces to pre-offensive position will facilitate the return of peace and normalcy in the Tamil areas. As a preliminary measure towards peace we urge you to prevail upon Sri Lanka to grant amnesty to LTTE and to release our members and supporters who are presently in custody with the IPKF.

As previously agreed in the minutes of the agreement reached between the Government of India and the LTTE, we pledge to surrender our arms as soon as an Interim Administration is formed with a majority role for our organisation. As we have repeatedly assured you, the LTTE will co-operate with the Government of India with the implementation of the Indo-Sri Lankan accord if Tamils' interests are promoted and Tamil people are protected. We hold the view that the Provincial Council proposal in the present form falls short of Tamils' aspirations and the LTTE should be allowed a crucial role in future nego tiations to work out an adequate frame work with satisfactory devolution of power for a regional Tamil state. I sincerely hope that you will give serious and urgent consideration to our suggestion and initiate immediate measures for ceasefire and negotiations to establish peace and alleviate the sufferings of our people.'

when the vehicles were returning to the depot, published reports quoting official sources said.

6

Express News Service

Colombo, Jan. 6: Eight LTTE cadres were killed and four IPKF men critically injured in a confrontation in Jaffna today.

According to reports reaching here, an eight-member gang of LTTE men went to a leading girls' school in Jaffna, advised the girls to go home and threw two smoke grenades at the school. While returning, the LTTE cadres met **with an IPKF patrol and in the confrontation eight of them were killed.**

Eight LTTE cadres were drowned when their boat was shot at and sunk by Indian helicopters in Batticaloa lagoon today.

7

COLOMBO, Jan. 7.

An Indian soldier was killed and five others, including an officer, were wounded in a mine blast at Ellakulam in Sri Lanka's Eastern Province, according to a spokesman of the Indian High Commission here today.

The national news agency, "Lankapuvath", quoting another report from Trincomalee said an IPKF man was killed and six others were wounded by an "LTTE terrorist and land mine explosion" at Kumburupidi, north Trincomalee on Tuesday night. One of the wounded was reported to have been blinded by the explosion, the news agency said.

About 400 suspected LTTE militants were apprehended by the IPKF in a two-day operation at Kattankudy and neighbouring areas in Eastern Batticaloa District, reports here said today.

LTTE boats intercepted: Meanwhile, the Indian naval ship *INS Nilgiri* intercepted two LTTE high-speed boats with ten occupants near Trincomalee in the past 24 hours, an official spokesman said in New Delhi on Thursday.

He said the occupants were being interrogated as the boats were suspected of smuggling arms.

In another, incident, Indian naval helicopters attacked two LTTE boats, sinking one and destroying the other. The occupants of the boats managed to swim ashore.

Informed sources said "Mahila' (women) central reserve police personnel were being deployed at major checkpoints in the Jaffna peninsula and they had already taken up duties at the Elephant Pass barrier.

The sources said the IPKF seized a large quantity of bombs, grenades and ammunition during search operations in the peninsula on Wednesday.

8

COLOMBO, Jan. 8.

At least eight persons — seven Sri Lankan and Indian soldiers and a Buddhist monk — were killed in separate incidents of extremist violence in Sri Lanka during the past 36 hours, official sources said.

Three Sri Lankan soldiers and a civilian driver were killed when suspected LTTE militants ambushed a mobile patrol near Padaiya in the

Vavuniya sector in northeastern Sri Lanka last evening, official sources here said.

In another incident three IPKF soldiers were killed in a blast at Trincomalee yesterday, a spokesman of the Indian High Commission here said. Elsewhere in the southern Sri Lanka suspected extremists of Janatha Vimukti Peramuna gunned down a Buddhist monk, said to be close to the ruling United National Party. The monk was pulled out of the temple in Dickwela and shot from a point blank range, sources said.

Second battalion leaving today: A battalion of IPKF would be leaving for home from the Kankesanturai port in northeastern Sri Lanka tomorrow morning, the spokesman said. The battalion was originally scheduled to leave today. Another battalion was withdrawn last week. — PTI

At 117th mile post from Vavuniya of Jaffna, an IPKF jeep was blown up in a land mine blast. 5 dead, some wounded.

IPKF Copters started indiscriminately around Thangavelayuthapuram, Amparai dt.

9

Six IPKF soldiers were killed in a land mine attack on the Train heading towards Mattakalapu at Kiran.

500 IPKF men from Thirukovil – Puttammai army camp rounded up Thangavelayuthapuram (Amparai Dt.); burnt down 20 huts and killed 4 innocent civilians.

10

COLOMBO, Jan. 10

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) last night killed three members of rival Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation (TELO) in an attack on their camp at Puliyankulam, 200 km north of Vavuniya.

An Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) detachment from a nearby camp rushed to the spot on hearing the exchange of fire and engaged the LTTE men, who withdrew into the jungles. It was not known whether the LTTE suffered any casualties.

Meanwhile, the LTTE issued notices in Vavuniya and the Eastern Batticaloa asking the people not to cooperate with the civil administration from January 15. Those who cooperated would be considered "traitors", it said. — UNI

NEW DELHI, Jan. 10.

Twenty-three LTTE cadre surrendered to the Indian Peace Keeping Force during the past 24 hours in the Jaffna peninsula and 17 were apprehended in different areas of the Northern Provinces.

One LTTE cadre was killed in an exchange of fire with IPKF jawans.

According to official sources here today, despite threats from LTTE, schools were functioning regularly in the Jaffna peninsula. — UNI

11

Two LTTE cadres Ajit and Rasulan were killed by IPKF in an encounter at Alavetty Jaffna.

While boarding a Train, 3 IPKF soldiers were killed on the spot by LTTE at Mattakalapu station.

Mr. Sewarajah, father of 3 children, an employee of Valachenai papermill at Batticaloa Dt., was beaten severely to death by IPKF.

12

NEW DELHI, Jan. 12.

In search operations for arms and ammunition in the Jaffna peninsula, the IPKF captured a significant quantity of arms belonging to the LTTE in the Northern sector in the past 24 hours. The External Affairs spokesman said here today that the discovery of the arms dump was possible because of the support of the local populace.

The arms haul yielded 20,531 rounds of ammunition, 564 grenades and 210 bombs and other explosives. One rocket launcher and 23 anti-tank rockets were also captured. Arms dumps at Koppai North, Chavakacheri and near the Clock Tower area in Jaffna were also discovered.

Marine commandos of the IPKF launched a raid in Kayts Island , off Jaffna , and captured 29 LTTE militants and a large quantity of arms. One of the two LTTE suspects apprehended from the Coastal road reportedly consumed cyanide and died.

3 TELO men killed: In a bid to terrorise rival groups, the LTTE launched a major attack yesterday against the Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation (TELO) in the Vavuniya sector killing three and injuring one person. The LTTE militants used AK-47s, machine guns, hand grenades and rocket launchers and also attacked a nearby IPKF outpost. It is reported that the LTTE group leader, Mr. Dalip was injured in the exchange of fire.

In the Batticaloa sector the LTTE tried to disrupt train traffic by firing at a train running from Batticaloa to Vellichennai. The IPKF rounded up 34 suspects in search operations in Arrapatti.

13

COLOMBO, Jan. 13.

Nine persons including an Indian soldier and an area leader of the LTTE, were killed in continuing violence by Tamil militants and Sinhala extremists in Sri Lanka, official sources said today.

They said a jawan of the IPKF and the LTTE's area commander, 'Jessy', along with his bodyguard were killed in a fierce gun-battle on the Vavuniya-Mannar Road in the North.

In a separate incident, Mr. K. Yogasankari, a founder member of the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF) escaped unhurt when a suspected LTTE gunman fired at his vehicle near a school in the northern Jaffna town.

Colombo, Jan. 13 (UNI): Mr. A. Ratnam, president of the citizen's committee of Kondavil, in the northern Jaffna peninsula, was today brutally murdered by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) for allegedly cooperating with the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF), informed sources here said.

They said three LTTE men had

NEW DELHI INTRANSIGENT

The LTTE leader, Mr. Prabhaharan's suggestion to pull back the IPKF to their October 9th position is not acceptable to the Indian Government, according to official sources in New Delhi. Commenting further, the sources said that the Government had no intention to allow the LTTE which is an 'unelected and unrepresentative' organisation to wield armed control over the northern and eastern provinces of Sri Lanka.

'JIHAD' LTTE STATEMENT

A press statement was issued on 2.1.88 by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam in Batticaloa, the eastern city in Sri Lanka.

'LTTE was compelled to take a strong action against a group of armed Muslim homeguards called "Jihad" which was formed and sponsored by the fascist Sri Lankan regime, to create tensions and divisions among the Tamil-speaking Muslims and Tamils in the Eastern Province.

This homeguards group was responsible for the murders of the Asst.Govt.Agent of Muthur, Mr.Asique Mohammed, in October 87 and the former M.P.(S.L.F.P) for Muthur, Mr.Abdul Majid, during Nov.87, while on 30th Dec.87 at Kaththankudy four innocent Tamils and an LTTE cadre Nazir were killed by this unholy group of Muslim homeguards going by the name of "Jihad". This unacceptable and deplorable behaviour earned the anger and displeasure of the Muslim people in the area. Even though the people urged action to be taken against this group of homeguards, LTTE showed great restraint, to minimise any further development of tension. The Muslim people clearly understood the LTTE's position and supported us. Increasingly large numbers of Muslim youths joined our liberation organisation, on whose representation, insistence and active participation the LTTE was compelled to launch attacks on this armed Muslim homeguards group, killing 30 of them on 30th Dec.87 at Kaththankudi and another 9 of the same homeguards group at Oaddamavadi in Nov.87.

LTTE has also banned PLOTE, EPRLF and TELO as these groups are also engaged in barbaric attacks on the Tamil-speaking Muslim people and are engaged in treacherous activities to create ten- sion and division among the people, for their own ends.'

called at Mr. Ratnam's house in the morning and asked him to come for an "inquiry". His bullet-riddled body was found near the Kondavil railway station. Mr. Ratnam, who was a lecturer at the Kokkuvil technical college, was formerly a journalist in a Colombo Tamil daily.

14

At Paranthan of Kilinochi dt in a clash with IPKF, two LTTE cadres Prasath and Karan lost their lives.

15

3 IPKF soldiers were killed in a landmine attack by LTTE at Karuvelankandal.

16

In an attack on the IPKF checkpost of Vainavapuliankulam of Vavuniya dt. an IPKF soldier was shot dead; many wounded.

There more IPKF men were shot dead at an encounter with LTTE at Nedunkeni. Again near Pamdarakulam LTTE attacked IPKF, leaving 12 more IPKF men dead.

17

NEW DELHI, Jan. 17.

Three liberation tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) militants were killed and four others injured in clash with the Indian peace-keeping forces in the northern and eastern province of Sri Lanka during the past 24 hours.

An official spokesman here said more than 12,000 rounds of ammunition was recovered in the search operations.

Despite the LTTE threat to kill Government employees and teachers after Pongal, all offices, banks and educational institutions functioned normally, he added. — UNI

18

In Batticoloa, LTTE attacked Jail and released 72 detenus.

19

COLOMBO, Jan 19.—The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in a daring jail-break today released all 54 inmates of the Batticaloa prison in eastern Sri Lanka, reports UNI.

They announced that it was part of their programme to disrupt the functioning of the Government.

Batticaloa residents said 10 armed LTTE men went to the prison located in the heart of the town at 9.45 a.m. and forced the prison guards to open the gates. They then ordered the inmates—15 convicts and 39 prisoners—to flee When the prisoners hesitated the LTTE men warned them that they would be shot dead if they stayed The prisoners and the LTTE men then escaped into the crowded locality outside

LTTE killed 3 IPKF soldiers at Uppodai during Cordon and search operation by IPKF.

20

Colombo, Jan. 20 (PTI): Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) militants attacked the Pottuvil police station in the eastern Amparai district in the early hours of Wednesday partly damaging the building.

There was exchange of fire for some time before the Sri Lankan police repulsed the attack by the militants some 50 in number. No casualty was, however, reported.

The LTTE militants, now on the run both in the north and eastern provinces, have been launching sniper attacks on police stations to boost the sagging morale of their cadre, according to official sources.

Express News Service adds: About 15 of the prisoners set free by the LTTE on Tuesday morning from the Batticaloa jail are reported to have surrendered by Wednesday morning according to reports from Batticaloa.

Following Tuesday's jailbreak, the IPKF has now set up camp outside the jail. Some of the prisoners had surrendered to the hospital police post on Tuesday evening itself. Most of them had been afraid to venture out since they had no identity cards with them and knew they could easily be apprehended.

Mastermind: "Mathan" a member of the LTTE who undertook a fast in Batticaloa at the time LTTE member Thileepan started his fast unto death at the Nallur temple in Jaffna, has been seen in Batticaloa. Mathan was not killed in the Jaffna operation as was generally believed. It was he who is believed to have masterminded Tuesday's jailbreak.

In Trincomalee, an LTTE cadre lost life, while at Valaichenai an IPKF soldier was shot dead by LTTE in a confrontation.

In a grenade charge by LTTE on the IPKF check post near Chavakachcheri 4 IPKF men were killed.

21

In an attack with mortars on IPKF camp at Kumpurupitti, LTTE killed 4 IPKF soldiers.

In Surakalli of Mattakalappu and in Chavakacheri of Jaffna dt. 4 IPKF men were shot dead by Tigers. Also in Ottamavadi an Indian soldier lost life in a skirmish with LTTE.

22

Colombo, Jan. 22 (UNI): Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) guerillas on Friday shot dead the senior-most ci8vil administrator of Sri Lanka's north western Mannar district for allegedly "cooperating" with the Indian Peacekeeping Force.

Official sources here said, Mr. M.M. Makbool, government agent (equivalent to District Collector in India) was returning from Talaimannar to Mannar in his car when LTTE gunmen stopped the vehicle at Parappukadanthan and shot him dead after pulling him out of the car. They said two other officials who were in the car, were not harmed.

23

The IPKF burnt down some 15 houses at Kalpitti. Some people were wounded in firings. An IPKF soldier was killed by LTTE attack and at Omanthai two Indian Army personnel lost their lives.

24

A top LTTE commander 'Castro' died after consuming cyanide in Batticaloa yesterday. Reports say that he threw a hand grenade at an IPKF patrol and when the grenade failed to explode and he was about to be apprehended, he took a cyanide capsule. In Velvettiturai in the Jaffna peninsula, two top-level LTTE cadres, Pavalasingham alias Jagan and Kathiranathan alias Josef surrendered. An interesting development in the Jaffna area has been the recovery of a number of walkie-talkie radio sets abandoned by the LTTE, indicating a breakdown of the command and communication structure.

COLOMBO, Jan. 24.

Nine LTTE militants surrendered to the Indian Peace keeping force at Karaveddy in Jaffna peninsula on Saturday while one militant was killed and another captured in an encounter with the IPKF, according to an Information Department press release, which quoted the Joint Operations Command (JOC).

It said the IPKF recovered 772 rounds of ammunition, 45 kg of explosives and 26 rounds of 16mm mortars at Achuvely, Milady and Karanavai.

Refugees back home: Meanwhile, a fourth batch of 356 Sri Lankan Tamil refugees, comprising 85 families, returned to Talaimannar in north western Mannar district in an Indian naval ship. As many as 1200 refugees have returned so far.

Detained without charge: More than 2,000 suspected Tamil and Sinhala militants have been detained without charge because of the growing political and ethnic unrest, according to official sources. "Both categories of detainees can be regarded as political prisoners," one source said, speaking on the condition of anonymity. "They are not held in ordinary jails but in police stations and military camps."

In a confrontation in Amparai dt. 3 Indian soldiers were killed and in Adampan of Mannar dt. 2 soldiers were shot dead by the LTTE.

In Thirukovil of Amparai dt. 11 innocent Tamil Civilians were shot dead by IPKF. 5 houses were burnt. 2 children with their parents were victimised to the IPKF firings.

25

5 IPKF personnel were killed in a confrontation with LTTE in Kinniyadi.

26

The body of an LTTE member is said to have been found in the vicinity of where the IPKF was ambushed by the LTTE around 10 this morning, according to High Commission sources. It is believed there was more than one LTTE casualty. Two IPKF personnel were also reported killed in a landmine explosion in Uruthapuram, ten miles from Kilinochchi this morning. Meanwhile, two IPKF personnel were killed near the Batticaloa airstrip this afternoon when LTTE cadres fired from across the lagoon. In the exchange of fire, ten LTTE cadres are reported to have been killed, according to unconfirmed reports.

IPKF killed two civilians at Batticoloa and 5 at Kodikamam. LTTE encountered IPKF at various places and inflicted heavy losses on IPKF while it lost one of its cadres Maran at Kodikamam. IPKF losses:

Udayarkaddu – 8
Batticaloa – 6, Jaffna – 6,
Kalkadu – 2, Kallappadu – 1,
Chavakachchery – 3, Kankam – 10,
Puliyadi – 3, Kodikamam –9,
Vavunativu – 5. And 9 more were severely wounded.

On 26th, January hartal was observed all over Tamil Eelam successfully to protest against the Govt. of India inviting J.R. Jayavardene as a host on its Republic day.

27

Colombo, Jan. 27 (UNI): At least 35 persons, including 14 Indian peacekeeping Force (IPKF) personnel and 16 militants were killed as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) launched a series of attacks on the IPKF in

HARTAL A SUCCESS

Tamil Tigers in the north and east of Sri Lanka demonstrated their contempt for the 40,000 Indian troops in their midst, and their continuing hold over the local population, by organising an almost completely successful hartal, or total strike, in protest against the Indian presence.

The protest was inevitably marked by violent clashes between the Tamil Tigers and the so-called Indian Peace-keeping Force.

At least The main fighting was in and near the eastern coastal town of Batticaloa, where the Indian forces are awaiting reinforcements.

The day's events dismally underlined the tenuous nature of Indian control of Tamil areas. Although vastly out-numbered, the Tigers were able to mobilise the population of the north and east into a highly effective protest marking India's Republic Day.

In Batticaloa and other Tamil areas, the faint semblance of normality restored by the arrival of Indian troops last summer was swept aside by the hartal.

Government offices, shops, and other businesses closed and transport services ground to a halt.

R.K. Lakshman, Times of India, 25.1.88

Sri Lanka's North and East during the past 48 hours, according to authoritative sources and published reports.

The attacks came in the wake of the LTTE's call for a general strike in the two provinces on India's Republic Day to protest against alleged Indian support to the Sri Lankan government to suppress what it called the "aspirations" of the island's Tamil community. The strike had paralysed normal life throughout the provinces on Tuesday.

Authoritative sources said a 36-hour curfew was imposed the eastern Batticaloa town on Tuesday evening after the LTTE ambushed an IPKF patrol near the railway station, killing two jawans.

They said eight militants were killed in the exchange of fire that followed, while about 15 civilians were injured and two shops damaged in the "crossfire."

Tamil sources in Batticaloa alleged that five civilians, including a child, were killed in what they called "indiscriminate" firing by the IPKF and the Sri Lankan police following the LTTE attack. They said the child was killed at a place about three kilometres away from the railway station.

The Batticaloa police said the LTTE launched a mortar attack on the town police station following the ambush on the IPKF patrol. But the attack was repulsed jointly by the police and the IPKF. The attack lasted nearly four hours.

The sources said one militant was killed and two IPKF men were injured when the LTTE ambushed an IPKF patrol at Navatkuli in the northern Jaffna peninsula on Tuesday. Later, the LTTE exploded a landmine, killing one IPKF jawan, when reinforcements were being sent to Navatkuli.

The whole area had been cordoned off and a search for the militants was under way.

A city daily, *'Sun'* quoted the LTTE as having claimed that eight IPKF men were killed in an ambush in the north-eastern Mullaitivu district. A 24-hour curfew had been imposed in the whole district following the incident. The report did not say where the ambush took place. Indian sources here could not confirm the report.

29

COLOMBO, Jan. 29

Three boats carrying Tamil militants were shot at and destroyed and more than 40 captured during the last two days, as the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) continued its operations to disarm them, authoritative sources said here today.

The three boats were destroyed off the eastern coast near Nawaladi on Wednesday. All the occupants were believed killed.

Among the militants arrested were some hardcore members of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) including the group's "chief signal man" for the northern Jaffna town, the sources said. Thirty militants were arrested during a combing operation in Valvettithurai and Point Pedro in the Jaffna peninsula.

Three jawans and two civilians were wounded in sniper fire or attacks on IPKF patrols by the militants at Pungankulam, Aliwalai and Killinochchi in the North and Vandaramoolai in the East.

The sources said three hardcore LTTE men were shot dead by the IPKF at Rattalatti and Thiruvilan in the North and Araipattu in the east. They said one of the three killed was a prisoner who tried to escape while leading an IPKF party to an LTTE arms dump.

The IPKF continued to seize caches of arms hidden by the militants, during a search operation west of Manipay, near Jaffna. They seized 30,000 rounds of assorted ammunition, anti-personnel mines and detonators. A Belgium-made medium machine gun and one light machine gun and a Chinese made rocket launcher were recovered from Nawali, also in the peninsula.

Burnt Red Cross jeep recovered: The IPKF also recovered a burnt Red Cross jeep from the jungles of Chenakanai in the North. But it was not known since when the jeep was missing and whether any Red Cross personnel were in it.

The LTTE launched a mortar and rocket attack on a Sri Lankan army camp at Gemunupura in Trincomalee district last night. The attack was repulsed and the army did not suffer any casualties, Sri Lankan sources said.

The LTTE, however, killed two Muslim homeguards of the area in the course of the attack, they added.

30

COLOMBO, Jan. 30. (AFP) — Tamil rebels blew up a Sri Lankan army patrol in northeastern Trincomalee district today killing an officer and wounding four soldiers.

Military sources said fighters of the dominant Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam ambushed the patrol by exploding a landmine under their vehicle near a Sinhalese village.

The incident came two days after LTTE gunmen launched a rocket and mortar attack on Thursday on a Sri Lankan army camp in Trincomalee marking the second week of the rebels' forced civil disobedience campaign.

Residents in the eastern Batticaloa district said the LTTE had said it will not allow offices to reopen until the Government announced an interim administration for the Tamil areas giving greater share of power to the rebels.

Officials said Indian soldiers and Sri Lankan police were on maximum alert since Monday to prevent outbreak of fresh violence.

At least 35 people died in clashes involving the LTTE in the first two days of the week.

Meanwhile, the IPKF has taken into custody 79 LTTE members, the largest-ever to fall into its hands in one single operation, from Vadamarchchi area from where the Tigers supremo Velupillai Pirabhakaran hails.

While 42 of these LTTE members surrendered to the IPKF, the rest were apprehended after identification at Karaveddi in the last 24 hours.

P.K. Bhatlekar, Weekly 31.1.88

31

COLOMBO, Jan. 31.

Two Sri Lankan Army personnel and six Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) men were killed in a landmine blast and exchange of fire in Sri Lanka's Northern Mannar district today, taking the toll in weekend clashes in the island's North and East to 13, official sources here said.

They said the armymen were killed when they were leading an Indian Peace-Keeping Force (IPKF) convoy on a road-cleaning patrol at Uvilankulam on the outskirts of Mannar town. The militants blew up their lead vehicle with a landmine and opened fire at the IPKF convoy behind. The IPKF returned the fire, killing six militants, the sources said.

3 Sri Lankan soldiers were killed and 7 injured by mine **3** attacks from LTTE at Vilankulam in Mannar dt.

வீரவணக்கம்

LTTE MARTYRS

- Lt. Sindhu 1.1.88
- Mathi 1.1.88
- 2nd. Lt. Chandru 2.1.88
- Arul 5.1.88
- Dinesh 5.1.88
- Ajith 11.1.88
- [illegible]an 11.1.88
- Rahu[illegible]
- Gnanam 14.1.88
- Prasad 14.1.[illegible]
- Karunan 14.1.88
- Prakash 16.1.88
- Maran 16.1.88
- 2nd.Lt. Puvi 21.1.88
- Sriharan 9.1.88
- 2nd Lt. Sivam 2.1.88
- Vincent 3.1.88
- Suresh master 4.1.88
- Ranjan 5.1.88
- Easan 6.1.88
- Ramesh 8.1.88
- Jayanthan 12.1.88
- Azeez 17.1.88

கிண்கிணி களைந்தகால் ஒண்கழல் தொட்டுக்,
குடுமி களைந்த நுதல்வேம்பின் ஒண்தளிர்
நெடுங்கொடி உழிஞைப் பவரொடு மிலைந்து,
குறுந்தொடி கழித்தகைச் சாபம் பற்றி
நெடுந்தேர்க் கொடிஞ்சி பொலிய நின்றோன்
யார்கொல்? வாழ்க, அவன் கண்ணி! தார்பூண்டு,
தாலி களைந்தன்றும் இலனே; பால்விட்டு
'அயினியும்' இன்று அயின் றனனே; வயின்வயின்
உடன்றுமேல் வந்த வம்ப மள்ளரை
வியந்தன்றும், இழிந்தன்றும் இலனே; அவரை
அழுங்கப் பற்றி, அகல்விசும்பு ஆர்ப்புஎழக்;
கவிழ்ந்து நிலம்சேர அட்டதை
மகிழ்ந்தன்றும், இகழ்ந்தன்றும், அதனினும் இலனே.

இடைக்குன்றூர் கிழார்.

2nd Lt. Chandru 2.1.88

Easan

Sriharan 9.1.88

Capt. Sabesan

Maj. Asok

KILLING □ FIELD

88 January

claims	IPKF		LTTE		S.L. ARMY		OTHER MILITANTS		CIVILIANS	
	KILLED	WOUNDED	KILLED	WOUNDED	KILLED	WOUNDED	KILLED	WOUNDED	KILLED	WOUNDED
IPKF									35	9
LTTE			2						31	
MEDIA										

2

9		1						4	

3

								25*	9*
14	5								

4

		7*							

5

1		11						5	
		2							

6

4		8							

7

1	5								

8

3				3				2	
5									
								1	

9

6								4	

10

		1	17c			1T			

11

3		2						1	

12

			29c			3T			

13

1		2						1	

14

			3						

15

3									

16

16		2							
								1	

17

			3	4					

19

3									

20

5		1							

21

9		1							

22

								1	

23

3									

24

		2	12c						
5								13	

25

5									

26

4		11							
53	9							7	

27

14		16						5	15

28

29

		3	40c					2	

30

			79c	1	4				

31

		6		2					
				3	7				

TOTAL										
	28	5	70	4 177+	6	4	4		76	33
	169	14	14		3	7			60	

* - Sri Lankan Information.c-captured. EP-EPRLF T-TELO, P-PLOTE, EN-ENDLF, E-EROS TNA-Tamil National Army CVF-Citizen s Voluntary Force

CHAPTER 8

1988

the heinous crimes of indian peace keeping

February

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LANKA GUARDIAN

COMMENT

Miscalculation in Sri Lanka

Nikhil Chakravarthy

This week the President of Sri Lanka will be our state guest. The idea of inviting him, despite strong feelings about his government's policy towards some of the issues in which this country is deeply interested, is known to be our Prime Minister's very own: and therefore one may legitimately infer that he sets much store by it.

However, if one were to go by the mood of the public instead of the Prime Minister's predilections, there is no gainsaying that there have surfaced perceptive reservations about Rajiv Gandhi's Sri Lanka policy. The euphoria that was whipped up in the wake of the Indo-Sri Lanka agreement of July 29 has, by all accounts, gone: and the six months since then have unfolded events which were not anticipated at all at that time. It would indeed be supremely fatuous for anybody in government to claim today that all the twists and turns in the developments since July 29, were expected at the time.

When the agreement was drawn up, it was known that the Prime Minister was in a hurry to sign it. Subsequent events made it abundantly clear that no severely objective assessment preceded the signing of the agreement. Subjective factors superseded careful appraisal. The Prime Minister signed the agreement by which he virtually assured that the Tamil militant groups would surrender all arms within 120 hours: but at that time, he had not received any firm assurance from the LTTE leadership that they would lay down arms at his behest.

In fact, at the press conference in Colombo following the signing of the accord, Rajiv Gandhi only conceded that talks were going on with Prabhakaran, not that he had agreed to surrender arms. Granting that the LTTE leaders went back on their word, how was it that India's intelligence agencies had no idea about the goings-on in the militants' camp nor about their military strength and capability? Nobody would be convinced by any bragging that the strong resistance put up by the LTTE against the Indian army had been anticipated. Had it been so, then there is legitimate ground for questioning the wisdom of pushing our armed forces into a misadventure about whose culmination there had been no perspective thinking.

Our chief of army staff has called for "a national consensus" on the role of the Indian armed forces in Sri Lanka. Such a consensus can emerge only if one were clear about the policy behind the operation. In contrast to what happened in 1971 — when at every stage of the fast-growing crisis, the Prime Minister kept all political parties informed both officially and informally — Rajiv Gandhi has only cared to have a few casual meetings with the opposition leaders. And these too were given up with the July 29 aggreement. No consultation has taken place at subsequent crucial stages of development.

Does the government have a clear idea about its Sri Lanka policy today? The government is claiming that our armed forces had to fight the LTTE to enforce the Sri Lanka agreement. But is the government satisfied that the other party to the agreement — that is, the Sri Lanka government — has been faithfully carrying out is obligations under the accord? New Delhi has done its best to sell President Jayawardene's legislative measures but even the moderate Tamil opinion represented by the TULF cannot accept these. Now it is being said that President Jayewardene has given his "personal assurances" that he would concede more reforms for the north. It is strange that our government should be gullible enough to take his words seriously when no party in Sri Lanka — not even his own — takes him at his word. This is not meant as a slur on his reputation but as a measure of his remarkable capacity to shift his position. With two of his ministers dead set against the agreement; with the knowledge that his security forces have been infiltrated on a large scale by the JVP; with large-scale violence being perpetrated by the Sinhala fanatics in the south, Rajiv Gandhi trusts that the commitment of July 29 would be honoured by President Jayewardene. Uptil now, there has been no firm guarantee that he would hold the promised elections in the north and east. Instead, it is now common knowledge that two of President Jayewardene's ministers were engaged at the beginning of this month in secret talks with LTTE leaders striking a deal after which the Indian army would have been asked to quit.

All this was done with President Jayewardene's knowledge and consent at the last moment he seemed to have got cold feet about clinching the secret deal. But this does not mean that more such moves would not be forthcoming in the near future.

There is also the danger that in view of the worsening situation in the Sinhala areas of the south, President Jayewardene might ask the Indian army to help him keep the peace there. Is the Rajiv government prepared to go in for such a commitment since this is also possible under the July 29 accord? Have we worked out the implications of such a situation in which India might annoy other political forces in Sri Lanka, while trying to pull President JRJ's chestnuts out of the fire?

It is now being given out that India moved its troops to Sri Lanka to pre-empt any other power taking over the island: presumbly the the reference is to Pakistan. If that were so, why was this not publicised widely at the time? New Delhi could not possibly have had any inhibitions about exposing Pakistani mischief. The point to note is that in the public eye this latest explanation sounds like an afterthought. It is time that the government undertook a serious review of its involvement in Sri Lanka and come to a clear understanding of the prospects ahead. To admit a miscalculation is a sign of greater strength for a government to try to cover it up. The move to have a treaty with President Jayawardene should await such a review of the entire policy towards Sri Lanka. The Prime Minister would be wise to take the nation into confidence insted of putting his trust in President Jayewardene.

1.2.88

"THEY LOVED US WHEN WE FIRST WENT THERE"

"We thought it would be a banda (stick) fight. It was only when our men began to die that we realised - arre this is battle! When we went there we didn't know who the enemy was - who we were to protect and who we are to fight."

Indian Peace Keeping Force personnel, limping back to India from the streets of Sri Lanka after battles that have reached dimensions undreamt of seven months ago,are a bruised, battered, but not broken lot. Scattered over the Army's Southern Command's hospitals, their limbs broken, ugly wounds healing on once-strong legs, IPKF soldiers and officers reminisce about the events of the past few months. What has being posted in Sri Lanka meant to them?

Major R C S Negi of the Fourth Battalion, Mahar regiment, was injured on October 11, only four days after he reached Sri Lanka. Three companies of the battalion had gone to Navatkuli and then North Kopay for an attack on the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), but Major Negi and a few others were delayed at Kilinochi for lack of transport.The LTTE had got wise to its movements. The LTTE concealed an innocuous 'mine'(actually 20 litre jerrycan filled with gunpowder) against a culvert that the convey was to pass. Its intelligence sources apparently relayed a message saying that the only officer in the convoy was in the second transport. The mine was electronically detonated, from no more than 900 metres away, just as Major Negi's three tonner passed the culvert. It flew, he was told later, at least 15 feet into the air, thudded down and disintegrated.

The Fourth battalion has not always been fortunate enough to escape with injuries. "About ten of its men have died in Sri Lanka." Official figures state that 350 IPKF personnel have died and 1,100 have been injured since the Peace Keeping Force was first sent to enforce the Accord. The actual figures are said to be much higher, though casualties have been decreasing in recent months, "now that we have mastered insurgency-fighting", says Negi.

Two hundred and twelve of the wounded are still in the hospitals of the Headquarters of Southern Command in Pune. Two wards of the 26 ward Command Hospital are reserved for IPKF soldiers who require reconstructive surgery; 323 of them have filled the wards since IPKF operations began.

In the Intensive Care Unit of the hospital, Lance Naik Pratap Singh of the Signals regiment sits propped up in bed 'collar' round neck, so that all he can move are his eyes and lips. Twenty-seven year old Pratap Singh was injured two days after he landed in Sri Lanka while he was on his way to fetch the commanding officer in a jeep. When Rajiv Gandhi visited the hospital, he asked them how they were progressing. "What else could he ask? What has happened has happened... and what can I ask him now?"

Chief of the Army Staff, General K Sundarji, need have no fear that press reports are lowering the morale of the Force personnel. All soldiers interviewed were only too anxious to hurry back to Jaffna. Freshly recruited 18 year old Sepoy Machindra Mohite of the First Maratha Light Infantry saw 13 of his platoon die and seven get wounded during the LTTE ambush that injured him, but " I will be happy to go back." he gasps out, his eyes clouded with pain and his brow wet with perspiration. Early reports stated that IPKF personnel were confused about the role they were to play in Jaffna, a fact corroborated by one who confesses *"We didn't know whose side we were on." Most, quite simply, didn't know what they were in for. "We thought it would be a banda (stick) fight. "Didn't your commanding officer tell you it was more than that? " we asked. "Oh, he didn't know either." comes the blithe reply.*

The army has had to face criticism

Major Negi

Pratap Singh

Sepoy Machindra Mohite

that the IPKF has indiscriminately killed and harassed civilians. It recently admitted that four soldiers had been court-martialled on charge of raping women. But the wounded are cautious in their response to queries. "Some civilians have died in the crossfire," says Major Negi. "When the Tigers shoot at you from people's houses, you shoot back..." "The public was very nice," says Subedar Rana. "They loved us when we first went there." Rana was stationed at the 16th century Nallur Kandaswamy temple in which 20,000 Tamils had taken refuge. "We played with their children; when they had nothing to eat, we gave them our rations. Sometimes, our rations would not come. Then we would grasp chicken, a goat, kill it and eat," he laughs, joyfully enacting the vignette for us. "But later, when they started shooting us, khoon garam ho gaya (our blood boiled). Then the trouble started."

Now, with the numbers stationed at Jaffna having risen from 4,000 to at least 50,000, with Rs 4 crores being spent, per day, on keeping them there and with Sri Lankan politics in a state of flux, the IPKF has a tough, still undefined, task ahead of it. But ask a soldier whether he has any doubts and he will say, "This is my work. I have to do it."

(Excerpts from "The price of peace keeping" Indian Express, Feb 7, 1988- emphasis ours)

GENERAL STRIKE HITS BATTICALOA

The strike was called by the Eelam Revolutionary Organisation of Students (EROS) and supported by the LTTE. Residents from Batticaloa said streets were deserted and the situation was tense. The Strike, second in six days, was called to protest at the arrest of four leading members of EROS, including its Batticaloa commander, by the Sri Lankan special task force commandos (STF) a few days ago. All the arrested were flown into Colombo by the Sri Lankan police detectives for further investigations into a bomb explosion incident in the city in 1986. Meanwhile, reports in Colombo said that at least 13 Sri Lankan soldiers were wounded when an army vehicle carrying them from Trincomalee to Habarana in the eastern province hit a landmine laid by the LTTE. Four of the 13 wounded soldiers were admitted to hospital in serious condition, the sources added. This was the third consecutive day the Sri Lankan army came under the LTTE-laid landmine explosions in the north and east (Trincomalee), which have left four troops, including a Sri Lankan army officer, dead and 19 injured.

Five Tamil political prisoners at the New Magazine Prison at Welikade in Colombo began a fast unto death demanding the release of all political prisoners detained without trial.

The five who commenced the fast on 17 March are Sebamalai Francis Perera (22), Kandiah Amarasingham (31), Ramasamy Raman (21), Visvalingam Jeevaratnam (21) and Thangavel Ramadas (22).

Before undertaking the fast, over 800 Tamil political prisoners detained at the Boosa army camp and the Welikade prison had written to President Jayawardene requesting him to grant them an amnesty in terms of the Indo-Sri Lanka accord. The text of the letter sent to President Jayawardene by 763 detainees at Boosa and 129 from Welikade is as follows:

'This request is in response to Your Excellency's address to Parliament on the occasion of the opening of its Eighth Session on Thursday, the 25th of February 1988.

'Your Excellency was pleased to say that Your Excellency will grant an amnesty to those who accept the Peace Accord, lay down arms and accept the democratic process.

'I wish to state by this letter that I am one who accepts the peace accord. I am incarcerated. Therefore, Your Excellency's request to lay down arms will not be applicable in my case. Nevertheless, I wish to state that I eschew violence, and I am committed to the democratic process in this country in which I would like to participate at the earliest possible opportunity.

'I, therefore request Your Excellency to consider favourably my immediate release consonant with Your Excellency's address to Parliament.'

LIVE AND LET LIVE

Thirumalai Nathan

Tamils as a race, without exception, are not against India, and its people. . It is this feeling of his people that Mr.Prabhaharan, the Leader and Supreme Military Commander of the LTTE, eloquently proclaimed at the famous Suthumalai Meeting last August when he said "we love India...". Why then is 'Mother India' fighting a bloody and costly war with its children?

The Indian forces have killed over 1400 innocent civilians and injured thousands. They were killed and injured every where - on the road, in their homes, inside temples, in the schools, even in refugee camps; killed and injured by mortar shells, from bombers and helicopter gunships. Their possessions, gold, jewelleries, electronic equipments, TV, radios clocks, furniture, etc. were all plundered. Their homes were destroyed, several razed to the ground. More than half the population in Jaffna were made homeless; they became refugees in their own land, unable to stay even in refugee camps without fear of being bombed or shelled. Worst of all, hundreds of young girls and mothers, including a grand mother of 79 years, were brutally raped and some of them done to death.

Why were all these atrocities committed, that too on its own people, by India ? Is this Hindu culture ? Is this what India inherited from the great saints and sages ? Is this what the great Mahatma Gandhi preached, to be practised by his country and its people for whom he gave his life ? Is this democracy ? Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, has destroyed completely the name of India and the fame great souls like his own grandfather, Jawaharlal Nehru have earned for India. He has committed crimes comparable only to those committed by Hitler and he has overtaken even Mr Jayewardene within a few months. How will he be remembered in history ? The Butcher of Jaffna? And now of Batticaloa?

Political power may now blind him. He should not continue to commit atrocities on a helpless nation of two million. What we are struggling for is a desire to live with safety and dignity in our own homeland.

We now face not the communalism of the Sinhalese but the imperialism of India under Rajiv. Rajiv should change direction before the Tamils are permanently alienated.

COMMENT

IPKF Must Be Withdrawn Forthwith

Which way is the wind blowing in Sri Lanka? Is it time to withdraw the IPKF? Does the accord have any relevance left? Is there more to India's considerations than meets the eye? ... In our last issue we had carried the views of a Sri Lankan revolutionary on these and several other related questions. Here is a different point of view by ***B. Sivaraman.***

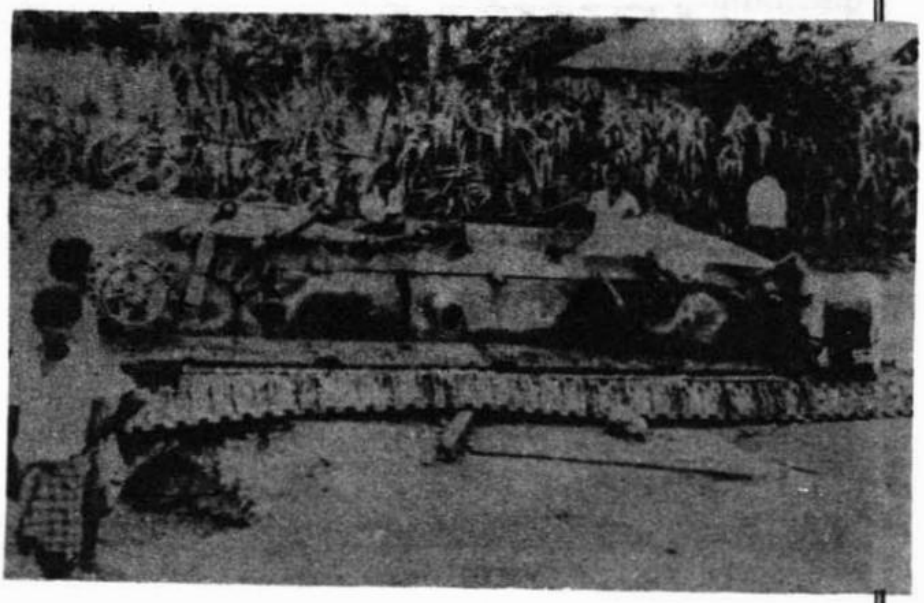
A major event like the Indo-Sri Lanka accord, in its wake, inevitably props up a whole crop of apologists. And understandably the dominant sections of the Indian left, the CPI(M) and CPI lived up to their traditions. But it seems they have their comrades-in-arms across the Palk Straits too. The same arguments, the same premises and, in effect, the same apologies. Only the crude logic of the Indian left is replaced by the refined pragmatism of their Sir Lankan counterparts. This is evident from the views of the Sri Lankan revolutionary whose interview has appeared in the January issue of **Voice of Alternative.** Best possible justifications for the IPKF's presence, no doubt, which are strikingly parallel to the very edifice on which India's Sri Lanka policy is anchored.

The Sri Lankan revolutionary starts with an assessment of LTTE, "The LTTE has always demonstrated its incapacity to distinguish antagonistic contradictions from non-antagonistic ones ....., its proclivity for violent resolution even of contradictions among the people", "By killing fellow militants it has broken up its own support base", "The war had begun to assume the characteristics of a reactionary war. A war between two reactionary forces, not equal though, one wielding state power, the other narrow nationalist". Sounds quite like an innocuous, angry statement. But on this premise is based an unasked question: What is wrong if IPKF destroyed LTTE, "a reactionary force"?

Well, a dialogue on the character of LTTE is very much needed and has to be kept open in future also. But before jumping to any conclusion one has to answer a few questions. If LTTE represents national chauvinism and hence is reactionary, then who represents progressive nationalism? Is the Tamil struggle similar to the classical national liberation struggles? Is the main internal issue of the Tamil struggle now that of class divisions and a corresponding political division along national chauvinism and progressive nationalism? If internal killings is the main criterion for dubbing it a reactionary outfit then do we extend the same logic to dub, say, PLO also as a reactionary outfit, the internal killings in whose case are unparalle'ed? How does one explain LTTE's attitude towards EROS, a formidable left group, whose name however is curiously omitted by our Sri Lankan revolutionary? If the LTTE has lost its "support base" as the Sri Lankan revolutionary would have us believe, how could they wage a war against IPKF that has sent shock-waves to Delhi? Does the sequence of events that led to the IPKF offensive against LTTE put the onus solely on LTTE? Of course, all this is not to give a clean chit to LTTE. I'm not holding a brief for LTTE and nor am I oblivious of the chauvinistic traits it has exhibited. All I am saying is that while assessing this organisation, which came up as a shock brigade of the moderate TULF and evolved as a purely military outfit when all other channels of activity were either choked or proved fruitless, and which subsequently was propelled on to the centrestage of Tamil resistance with lot of external help, without however, losing its internal roots, all the while facing constant war conditions under successive Sri Lankan offensives, one has to be cautious but one can surely say that the time to say the final word has not yet come.

And how to assess the July 29 accord? According to the Sri Lankan revolutionary, "this is the way the accord has been implemented so far: no peace, no peace in the North and East, no peace in the South, no devolution, no amnesty, no electoral process in the North and East or in the South, no interim administration. That is how the accord has worked: to the unilateral benefit of the government in Colombo." However in the same breath he goes on to add, "but unless I can present

a better alternative given the current correlation of forces, I am not going to oppose the accord....", "We are saying, implement the accord. The accord talks about a single council, about substantial devolution, about interim administration, about peace and about a multi-ethnic society — that is a conceptual breakthrough", he says. He also adds, "Of course, it should have been a tripartite accord... it was a kind of quickfix, there was no real drawing together (of the two forces pulling apart).... So the accord was fatally flawed, but our tragedy is that it was the last best chance".



Blown up : an IPKF tank blown up by LTTE

The accord was bad but it also contains something good; the accord was alright but only its implementation was bad — if one goes on stretching arguments like this there is going to be no end in sliding further and further into the morass of pragmatism. In fact the circumstances and the manner of signing the accord, the accord itself, its skewed implementation, the internal dynamics that the accord has unfolded in the island and its bleak future are not separable from each other. Nor can they be compartmentalised. The accord finds itself in such a paradoxical position that the more one tries to implement it the more irrelevant it gets, the more grows the danger of its collapse. How can you expect the LTTE to disarm until their demands are fulfilled in reality, especially when they are no signatories to the accord? How can there be an amnesty to the prisoners when their comrades are waging a guerrilla war against IPKF? How can there be an interim administration or elections under conditions of occupation and war? How can there be a real devolution when the first concrete step towards that would result in the toppling of the Colombo government and entry of IPKF into the South? IPKF presence has only complicated the problem further. It has not only failed to bring about the reconciliation but short-circuited the whole process and has made the situation highly explosive. Only an immediate ceasefire by IPKF and initiation of tripartite political process combined with the withdrawal of IPKF is the last best chance. So you see your tragedy was not that the accord was your last best chance, rather following the accord, your "last best chance", is a tragedy, and a colossal one at that.

"The IPKF should stay.... otherwise what material force will stand there between the Tamils and the Sri Lankan army", asks the revolutionary. And he is quite off the mark. The point at issue now is what material force stands between IPKF, the "peace force" which has killed and continues to kill thousands of people and renders lakhs of people refugees, and Tamils, the garrisoned, captive population. "IPKF is killing Tamills, no doubt, it is utterly reprehensible, but the Sinhala army killing Tamils is a qualitatively different proposition. Even if they kill fewer Tamils that is national oppression", he argues. Is stepping into the shoes of the Sri Lankan army perpetrating such national oppression, especially when one is looked upon by Tamils as a saviour, and delegitimising and decimating the LTTE, the best organised force of Tamil resistance any lesser propostion? Perhaps it is, if one assumes that for the Tamils there is no escape from killings.

In a complete reversal of sequence, the Sri Lankan revolutionary says that the IPKF should remain there till the political component of the accord is implemented. And till then what?

Ceasefire? Withdrawal to the October 9 position? No, nothing of that kind as far as our revolutionary is concerned. He just confines himself to saying that the IPKF's behaviour has to change: "I mean if they are checking women they should send women personnel to do the checking (sic!)". What a shame if Marxists cannot come up even to the level of numerous citizens' committees in opposing the presence of Indian troops. "The demand for the withdrawl of IPKF is difficult to support at this point of time. But the IPKF should not stay beyond 1988, i.e., after the referendum has taken place", he says. And he really sounds like a foreigner to Sri Lankan conditions who is totally ignorant of the ground realities there. A referendum, about which even the moderate TULF has expressed grave reservations owing to the forcible changes in the demographic pattern there in the East - where a Lebanon-type situation is already emerging — can take place only under the point of a gun, an IPKF gun. That, if anything, will only pin down the IPKF.

The accord finds itself in such a paradoxical position that the more one tries to implement it the more irrelevant it gets, the more grows the danger of its collapse.

"Theoretically this IPKF are bad guys, Indian bourgeoisie has expansionist ambitions, all these are correct, but practically, on the ground, who else is going to do this (i.e., containing both the LTTE and Sri Lankan army)", he asks. It is strange that when there is no discrepancy between the theory and practice of Indian bourgeoisie there should be such a glaring discrepancy betwen the theoretical and practical positions of a Sri Lankan Marxist. But this discrepancy is not accidental rather it is rooted in the following premise: "I don't see any other kind of danger like India being able to establish some kind of a neo-colonical hold over Sri Lanka. The IPKF doesn't have any anchorage in the island, it's hanging in the mid air". Well it is nobody's case that India is trying to establish such a hold of the classical type over Sri Lanka and nobody opposes India's role in Sri Lanka on this basis. But at the same time it is also naive to believe that the Indian bourgeoisie's power will not translate itself into hegemonistic influence in this region and it is precisely to consolidate this influence events were made to take this peculiar turn in Sri Lanka. And what better anchorage does the Indian government need other than a prolongation of the conflict there? Further he also says, "the role of the Indian state is very much like the role of a Bonapartist state. It is a regional Bonapartism. Once it tilts to the Tamils, equips them, then it tilts to the Sinhalase and raps the Tamils, now it's trying to get some more concessions". Leaving aside the silly obfuscation of the class character of the Indian state, these lines also reveal that he is readily buying the theory of "regional policemen" dished out by the liberals and fails to see in full measure the regional hegemonism that finds expression in the so-called "Rajiv's Monroe doctrine", in "the global recognition as a regional power" as put by Indian external affairs minister Mr. Natwar Singh and in all the talk about India's "strategic interests" and "regional preeminence". And tilting hither and thither is precisely how India got herself entrenched in Sri Lanka.

A solidarity between the progressive and left forces of India and Sri Lanka, as desired by the Sri Lankan revolutionaery can and must be forged and the one possible common basis is to promote co-operation between the two peoples against the regional designs of the Indian government.

We fully understand the complex and difficult conditions in which the Sri Lankan left finds itself. Whether a Khomeinist putsch is on the cards or not, Sinhala fundamentalism, we do feel, is a major threat. But we are afraid any reliance on India, if only as a lesser evil taking on a biogger evil, at a time when the entire Sri Lankan popular opinion has veered around, and quite rightly so, to an anti-IPKF position will only lead to further peripheralisation of the left. Incidentally this is one of the rare occasions when one finds the Sinhala and Tamil opinions objectively converging. And the Sri Lankan left committed to the vision of a multi-ethnic yet unified Sri Lanka can certainly build on this favourable objective factor. But instead of this if they choose to endorse India's actions, disregarding the overwhelming popular will, it will only snowball into a blunder of the dimension that the Indian communists had committed in 1942, something for which they are still paying a price. ☐

February '88

REPORT

IPKF men see Vietnam in Lanka

By R.S. Venkatesh

BOMBAY, Feb 2

The officers and men of the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) who have returned from Sri Lanka are already speaking of the war with the LTTE as India's Vietnam.

After 100 days of bloody fighting, the Lankan situation, in their view, continues to be as grim as it was on October 10 when they first joined battle with the Tamil militants. And now, several months after they set foot in Sri Lanka, it appears to them that the Army is there to stay.

These tales of Jaffna told by those who have returned — they have requested anonymity — reflect the tenacity, motivation, and desperation of the Tamils, and the consequent inevitability of a long and tortuous war ahead.

Among the tales is the one about an Indian officer who saw a familiar face in the Northern Province and confronted the *lungi*-clad Tamil militant. "I called out to him, seeking to verify his identity," the officer said, "only to learn that he was one of those I had trained in infantry combat in an Indian camp."

Such conflict is not only ludicrous but almost unimaginably dangerous, say the Jaffna-returned officers. "Scores of Tamils who spent several months training under Indian superiors are now aiming their crossfire unhesitatingly at the same officers — that too with our equipment."

Not that all the arms seized from Tamils are Indian. The best testimony to the LTTE's resourcefulness in acquiring armaments from diverse sources is a photograph depicting a senior Indian infantry officer holding four seized grenades in his palms. One of them is of Pakistani make, one Chinese, the third of local manufacture, and the fourth an Indian product.

What has stunned the IPKF much more is the LTTE's amazing stock of mines of all kinds. About 70 per cent of the Indian men killed or maimed in Lanka have been victims of mine blasts. The Tamils have what our Army calls 'Improvised Explosive Devices', distinct from the assorted ready-made mines of known capabilities.

"In Jaffna, the mines are crude, and most often comprise a drum topped with 100 kg of explosive, which is detonated by a civilian sympathiser from a few hundred metres away," a senior infantry officer of the IPKF said. And since about half the mines use liquid explosive, they escape the best mine-detectors.

A couple of scenarios from the recent past: Indian armoured personnel carriers are negotiating a narrow bend on the periphery of a town. An ageing woman innocently seated 300 metres away holds two ends of wire. She watches the first carrier go past, and then, as instructed, makes the wire ends meet. And up goes several hundred kg of explosive under the combat vehicles. Or, Indian soldiers are making a house-to-house search after capturing a town. Two jawans enter a block and rummage a box. And 100 kg of explosives blows up in their faces.

"Block their mine supplies, and half our job is done," an officer said. The Tamils have used every hour to dig six-foot-deep trenches all over the Northern Province to cache explosives. Very worrying is the thought

DAVID LEVINE/New York Review of Books

PDSO

that even the LTTE has lost track of some of the hideouts. "When several top LTTE personnel were killed in battle, they took the memorised maps of the mine caches with them," an officer said, adding that even if all the Tigers were to lay down arms, the unfound explosives would still be a big hazard.

A major victory the LTTE scored was the destruction of the Army's latest infantry combat vehicles, acquired barely a year ago.

The BMP-2s, as they are called, were purchased from the Soviet Union for Rs one crore each, and were displayed for the first time on Republic Day this year. Their special features include a night vision device, an automatic fire-fighting system, portability by air, and limited protection against nuclear-biological-chemical warfare (NBC). The Tamils have blown up five of them so far.

The Army has reasons to consider this loss worthwhile. The Lankan conflagration has provided the Indian Army an opportunity to test its latest vehicles and armament. Most of the types of machinery acquired since the war in 1971 were sent into Jaffna, partly to test their battle-worthiness.

"In that respect, the amphibious BMP-2s have proved remarkably effective. These combat vehicles traversed two km of ocean to the Sri Lankan shore after their offloading from Indian ships," remarked a junior officer who used the vehicle in the successful rescue of captured IPKF men. Its mobility, communication facilities and firepower, witnessed in Lanka, are being noted with satisfaction by the Indian Army.

Some of a group of officers who recently studied the Lankan situation from close quarters admit discreetly that their main folly, initially, was greatly underestimating of the tenacity of the militants. One of them said grimly, "They are driven by great motivation, and just won't give up."

And how is the morale of the IPKF? "It's good at the moment. But one can't say if the confrontation becomes long and arduous. The worst part is that the Sri Lankan Army is right there in front of us — playing volleyball every morning."

3.2.88

EDITORIAL

9.2.88

A tricky situation

THE REPORTED MOVE to despatch more troops to Sri Lanka to raise the strength of the Indian peace-keeping force from about 55,000 to 75,000 belies the official attempts to paint a rosy picture of the situation in the troubled island. Six months after the IPKF embarked upon a massive military operation its task remains far from complete, despite the heavy casualties which it has inflicted as well as suffered. While hundreds of cadres of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam have been liquidated, its recalcitrant leadership is still at large and retains the ability to regroup and strike. The LTTE's apparent ability to obtain replacements for men and material lost in action points to significant popular support for it. Use of terror is only a part of the explanation for the success of its civil disobedience campaign which has crippled the civil administration restored by the Indian army when it established its sway over the Tamil areas. The other part is that at least a section of the populace views the LTTE as a patriotic force defending the homeland against an alien army brought in by rulers in Colombo. At this stage it is imperative for the Government of India to pause to consider whether the objectives which have eluded it so far can be achieved by beefing up its military presence in the island further. Since a major consideration which weighed with it in assuming a military role was the need to prevent hostile forces from getting a foothold in the island, it must ask itself whether its entanglement in a prolonged operation will not in fact provide such forces a tempting opportunity to tie it down indefinitely by pumping arms to the Tamil militants ranged against it.

The most disconcerting aspect of the Sri Lankan situation is the scant attention paid by the leadership in New Delhi and Colombo to the political aspects of the ethnic crisis. After many months of neglect, the question of resuming the political processes received attention during President J.R. Jayewardene's visit to New Delhi for the Republic Day festivities. The wisdom of going ahead with the proposed provincial council elections when even moderate Tamil opinion has serious reservations about the formulations agreed upon by the two Governments is open to question. In any event, the new target date of April for the elections appears to be no more realistic than the December 1987 deadline set in the Indo-Sri Lankan agreement. At home, Mr. Jayewardene stands isolated, with the entire opposition barring the Communist Party setting its face against the agreement. While he has been able to push through the enabling legislative measures, it remains to be seen whether he can go ahead with the elections in the teeth of opposition from powerful elements within his own United National Party and the murderous campaign launched by the proscribed Janata Vimukti Peramuna. Meanwhile, Mr. Jayewardene's popular mandate, such as it is, is running out. As things stand, the chances of his successor standing by his commitments must be rated low. Should he perpetuate himself in power through a manipulative process, the legitimacy of the Indian military presence will be as much in question as that of his administration. Prudence demands that New Delhi should chalk out a course of action keeping in view all aspects of the emerging scenario.

TAMIL VOICE INTERNATIONAL

COMMENT

INDIA'S VIETNAM WAR; DOES RAJIV HAVE A WAY OUT?

Unverifiable parallels are the deadliest of self-deceptions. We will list the more important of these for those who have the sense of realpolitik:

1. India, it is said, cannot permit an independent Tamil Eelam because the 'infection' will spread to Tamil Nadu. Why then did India launch an independent Bangladesh? Tamil Nadu has accommodated itself to the prohibition of parties calling for a separate state. New Delhi does not treat the citizens of Tamil Nadu as if they are second class.

2. Sri Lanka, despite all the denials, has lost its sovereignty. The island state is partitioned with Indian troops in the Northern and Eastern provinces. Indian civil administrators are manning the bureaucratic apparatus in the Jaffna peninsula. The Indian army commander declared recently that he would take orders only from New Delhi, not from Sri Lanka's Commander-in-Chief, President J.R.Jayawardene. The Indian Commander received the fullest backing from India's High Commissioner in Colombo, J.N.Dixit. In addition, India has made it clear that it will not withdraw its troops until President Jayawardene's government honours its part of the Gandhi — Jayawardene Peace Accord of July 1987. This means that President Jayawardene has to legislate for regional autonomy and implement this in the correct spirit, as agreed in the Chidambaram proposals of December 1986, though the proposals are unsatisfactory.

Legislation has been enacted. It does not meet Tamil aspirations. But will the Jayawardene government or its successor government implement the provisions in the way intended — that the Tamil areas, the Northern and Eastern provinces, will enjoy de facto federal powers? What if these provisions are violated as they surely will be? The obvious result is a return to civil war and Indian intervention. The other possibility is of Indian forces remaining in the Northern and Eastern provinces in definitely. We will bet on the latter. India has come to stay, and will station itself as in Kashmir.

Still another reason for a continuing Indian presence is that the Jayawardene government has yet to enact legislation for Tamil to be recognised as an official language, with Sinhala and English. **The Grand Old Man of South Asia is caught in a nutcracker. He cannot slip out as in the past.**

3. The Accord of June 1987 was doomed from the very beginning, for two vital reasons. There were no provisions for (1) non- discrimination in admissions to Universities and Higher Institutes of learning, and (2) merit to be the criterion for employment in the public and private sectors. The war will continue without mitigation as long as these two problems remain unresolved.

4. The Sinhala leadership has failed to understand the realities of the Tamil situation. The vicious Sinhala Buddhist state compelled the Tamils to abandon the social contract and the civil polity. As a result there is both a social revolution and a war of independence. Jayawardene and Gandhi have tried to stop a revolutionary situation in its tracks. This cannot happen. It did not in the French, Soviet and Maoist revolutions. Either a revolution succeeds or fails. But it marches on to its inexorable goal. An immature Minister of Education, Ranil Wickremasinghe, meanwhile talks of 'rehabilitation classes' for Tamil youth; and the Minister of National Security, the unforgettable Lalith Athulathmudali, states that there must be a great deal of 'give and take', and that the Sinhala majority cannot have a permanently dissatisfied Tamil minority. The Minister has missed the point.

The Tamils no longer think of themselves as a minority.They are now a nation in their own right.They want political statehood.

5. What of India's position? Having entered as peacekeepers, they are now involved as participants in a war that can never end. The hope is that the Tamil militants will be killed or forced to the negotiating table once they have exhausted their firepower. There are three factors in the Indian intervention that are incapable of resolution. Firstly, as the Indian army officers have stated, their men cannot distinguish a Tamil guerilla from a Tamil civilian (fish dissolve in the ocean). And, in the Tamil Eastern province with its Tamil, Muslim and Sinhalese population, Indian soldiers will not be able to differentiate between Tamil militants, Tamil civilians, Sinhalese and Muslims. Secondly, the war will take an irreversible turn, when as already reported, Tamil militants move to the hill country plantations and mingle with the Tamil speaking plantation workers. Thirdly, the answer to the problem is not as simple as High Commissioner Dixit stated. Dixit thinks that if the Tamil militants refuse to negotiate, they will become 'irrevelant'. More to the point is whether Tamil militancy will permit a return to the civil polity of prerevolutionary times. As long as there is an unresolved political problem compounded by a social revolution, no political party can hope to compete in or work a political process rendered all the more hopeless by the failure of Gandhi and Jayawardene to consult with the parties to the dis- pute. None of these outcomes was envisaged by Prime Minister Gandhi or President Jayawardene. This will be an interminable war of attrition. India now counts Sinhalese and Tamils as its enemies, where previously the Tamils looked upon on India as their friend. India's passive and indifferent politicalised class believes that the massive Indian military strength can suppress andor eliminate Tamil militancy in a short time, that peace will return and the so-called peacekeepers can return to their Indian encampments.

'The best laid plans of mice and men go awry'.

SCRUTATOR.

Ms.Karen Parker, Attorney-at-Law and UN Representative for Disabled Peoples' International and Human Rights Advocates, handed over this letter addressed to the U N Secretary General at the end of a well-attended peaceful demonstration march through the streets of New York on 29.1.88. The full text of her letter is published below.

I address you in my personal capacity and as Chair of the Emergency Meeting on the situation in Sri Lanka and the status of Sri Lankan refugees held in Paris, 18-19 December 1987. This session was attended by more than fifty (50) persons representing thirty-four (34) non-governmental organizations. I also address you as Chair of the Special Committee formed at that meeting. As you are aware, the United Nations Commission on Human Rights addressed the situation in Sri Lanka in its resolution 1987/61 of 12 March 1987. Unfortunately, **the situation in Sri Lanka has deteriorated dramatically since that time, and now, regrettably, involves the Government of India.**

At our Paris session we heard eyewitness accounts from, inter alia, a European parliamentarian, two doctors from European humanitarian organizations, European journalists, and several clergy of the Roman Catholic Church. These accounts have been and continue to be buttressed by hundreds of direct communications from Tamil and non-Tamil Sri Lankan victims, including refugee groups, local governmental bodies and local Church groups. The accounts provide not only irrefutable corroboration of the facts that we know have been presented to you by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (hereinafter LTTE), but indicate that **violations of humanitarian law by the Indian Peace Keeping Force are even more widespread and grave.**

The gravity of the situation has been further compounded because the International Committee of the Red Cross has still not been able to fulfil its functions as authorised by the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and as urged in the above-mentioned Commission resolution 1987/61.

The purpose of this communication is not, however, to submit documentation of these tragic events, as we expect that you are fully apprised of them. Rather, we seek your attention and guidance to find an immediate end to the intolerable situation.

We are aware that the **LTTE have addressed you seeking your good offices - an initiative we heartily endorse.** While we are sensitive to the numerous demands made on your time by other serious situations in the world today, we would like to believe that the Governments of India and Sri Lanka would cooperate with you to seek a just and lasting solution to this long-standing problem with only minimum encouragement on your part. In particular, the Government of India has in the past shown leadership in addressing a number of pressing human rights and disarmament issues in the world, and must now find itself somewhat at odds with its previous laudable endeavours. I am personally convinced that the Government of India did not intend to become the persecutor of the Tamil people in Sri Lanka when it achieved the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord of 29 July 1987, and that it too, finds the current situation as intolerable for itself as it is for the Tamil people of Sri Lanka (and, indeed, for all the people of Sri Lanka). Because it saw itself, in good faith, the protector of the Tamil people under the 29 July Accord, I anticipate that India will act in good faith to restore that position.

We are also in possession of a communication from Mr.Veluppillai Prabhakaran, leader of the LTTE, to Mr.Rajiv Gandhi in which he indicates yet again that the **LTTE pledges to surrender their arms** and to "co-operate with the Government of India with the implementation of the Indo-Sri Lankan Accord if Tamil interests are promoted and the Tamil people are protected." **I do not find this communication either intransigent or ingenuine. Its open and sincere call for a cease-fire encourages me personally that the exercise of your good offices could yield fruitful results forthwith.**

In the event that a cease-fire is not immediately possible, we ask you to encourage the Governments in question to allow the International Committee of the Red Cross and other humanitarian organisations to fulfil their missions to relieve the suffering of the civilian population and to tend to sick or wounded combatants or civilians. We also urge you to call on all Governments who have Tamil and other Sri Lankan refugees to not return (refouler) these persons to Sri Lanka until the cessation of hostilities and until their personal safety can be assured.

Excellency, I trust you will accept our interest and concerns in good faith. We are willing to submit to you documentation we have of the events in Sri Lanka. We know you share our grief over the loss of life, injuries and damage to property suffered by all involved in the conflict in Sri Lanka. Excellency, please accept the assurances of my highest consideration.

REPORT

Hello, Goodbye

A brisk visit to New Delhi

By past standards, the official welcome was low key. As soon as his plane touched down last week at New Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport, Sri Lankan President Junius R. Jayewardene was driven to the pink-and-beige Rashtrapati Bhavan (President's House), where Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and about 50 government and diplomatic officials awaited his arrival. A 21-gun salute was fired, but there were no formal speeches. Jayewardene shook hands with his hosts and walked briskly toward his private suite to begin a five-day stay.

Indian officials said the truncated reception reflected recent changes in protocol, but the businesslike tone seemed fitting for Jayewardene's arrival. The Sri Lankan leader had several potentially disagreeable issues to take up with Gandhi. Chief among them was the slow progress made by Indian troops against the island republic's separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. The continuing bloodshed and increasing military commitment have put pressure on Jayewardene to push for a withdrawal of Indian troops, some of which have been in Sri Lanka since the two countries signed an accord last July 29 aimed at ending the insurgency. Also high on the President's list was a proposed Indian-Sri Lankan friendship treaty that would, in Colombo's view, redress some of the inequities in the peace pact.

After two rounds of talks with Gandhi, Jayewardene flew home last weekend with mixed results. On one hand, the leaders agreed to work out ways that would allow some 800,000 refugees of the conflict to return home. On the other, Gandhi gave Jayewardene no assurances that India would pull out its troops anytime soon.

Far from planning to withdraw, the Indian military in recent weeks has moved an additional division into eastern Sri Lanka. That brings Indian strength on the island to over 40,000 combat troops—more than ten times the number initially dispatched last summer. The buildup bolsters New Delhi's hopes that the Tigers, masters of disruptive hit-and-run tactics who are now concentrated in the Tamil-dominated east, can be subdued long enough to permit the provincial council elections that are mandated by the peace agreement. Last week Jayewardene announced that as a result of his talks with Gandhi, he would call for council elections beginning in March or April.

But that only fanned tensions on the island, where the Sinhalese majority opposes another feature of the accord, a provision that the country's two Tamil-dominated provinces must be merged before elections can be held. On yet another sensitive voting issue—when general elections for Sri Lanka's 196-seat parliament might occur—Jayewardene remained mute. The President has postponed national balloting since 1983 because of the Tamil insurgency. Now, despite mounting pressure in Colombo, he has refused to advance the prospective election date of September 1989.

SIPA—SIPA

India's Gandhi greets Sri Lankan President Jayewardene

An agenda of potentially disagreeable issues, and few results.

Jayewardene also failed to make much progress in New Delhi on the proposed friendship treaty. Among other things, India wants assurances that Sri Lanka will not offer its ports to any third country for military use. That condition is aimed primarily at embargoing Pakistani, Israeli or U.S. forces. Sri Lanka made such a promise in connection with the July 29 accord, but Jayewardene left the pledge out of the proposed friendship treaty. The omission led India to suspect that the President wanted to dilute other commitments made in the original pact. As a result, the treaty debate promises to be prolonged.

More trouble awaited Jayewardene upon his return. While he was meeting with Gandhi in New Delhi, the Tigers launched a surprise attack on an Indian patrol in the eastern city of Batticaloa, a raid that left eleven dead. The killings brought fatalities in the almost five-year-old civil war to roughly 8,000, most of them civilians. —***By Susan Tifft. Reported by Qadri Ismail/Colombo and K.K. Sharma/New Delhi***

FEBRUARY 8, 1988

Recall IPKF: V. P. Singh

NEWS

Express News Service

Madras, Feb. 18: Jan Morcha leader V. P. Singh said here on Thursday that recalling the Indian army from Sri Lanka and promoting talks between LTTE leader Prabhakaran and President Jayewardene would pave the way for a solution to the Lankan ethnic issue.

However, he refused to commit himself on the specifics of such a solution. The Lankan people themselves had to find an honourable solution, he said. He was speaking at a news conference here.

Earlier, he cited the handling of the Sri Lanka issue by Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi to claim that Mr. Gandhi and the Centre had lost their "sense of direction" in handling issues. It reflected "confused thinking", hurry and haste, Mr. Singh said.

The initial mistake was the signing of the accord with the Sri Lankan President. "It should be between Prabhakaran (LTTE leader) and President Jayewardene"

The result of this mistake was that the Indian army was asked to shower bullets at the same place (Jaffna) where they had dropped food packets earlier. "We are proud of the Indian army," he said but added that those who had given the orders to the army should be held responsible.

He said no national purpose had been served by committing the Indian army in Sri Lanka, spending crores of rupees every day and sacrificing the lives of soldiers. Mr. Gandhi gave out the reason that it was to prevent Israeli and Pakistani forces getting involved in Sri Lanka, but this was refuted by Sri Lanka Prime Minister Premadasa.

The accord provided for a referendum in the East for merger with the North but would it be acceptable to India if a similar demand was made in respect of Kashmir, he asked.

REPORT

Treaty in the making

Jayewardene hopes a treaty with India will help in elections

Manik de Silva in Colombo

Sri Lankan President Junius Jayewardene ended a state visit to India on 30 January describing his tour as "very successful." Largely due to the negotiations during the trip, New Delhi will further bolster the Indian Peace-Keeping Force (IPKF) in Sri Lanka. The aim is to break the back of the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), which has regrouped in the Eastern Province since suffering heavily at the hands of the IPKF in the Northern Province.

Indian commanders expect to mop up the remaining LTTE resistance in the north within a month and bring the east under control by the end of April, which could pave the way for provincial council elections by June. Back in Colombo, Jayewardene faces formidable problems, including Sinhalese terrorism in the south and dissension within his United National Party (UNP).

Jayewardene, whose tenure as president ends early next year, took along to New Delhi two key ministers, Gamini Dissanayake and Lalith Athulathmudali who, with Prime Minister Ranasinghe Premadasa, are the front runners for the UNP ticket at next year's presidential election. Dissanayake, who played a key role in negotiating the July Indo–Sri Lankan peace accord, is a particular favourite of the Indian Government.

Athulathmudali, on the other hand, has been lukewarm about the accord, cautiously treading a tightrope in seeking to retain his popularity among the Sri Lankan armed forces and majority Sinhalese, while at the same time not appearing to rebel against government policy. As deputy defence minister, he as well as Gen. Cyril Ranatunge — the joint operations commander who was also on the delegation — had an important role to play in discussions with the Indian defence establishment.

Analysts in Colombo have noted that while there appeared to be complete trust between Jayewardene and Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, the Sri Lankan and Indian bureaucracies are suspicious of each other. One of the main objectives of the Jayewardene visit was to ensure that bureaucrats did not undermine the relationship between the two leaders. The Colombo delegation was keen on impressing on the Indian prime minister that Jayewardene had a greater stake than Gandhi in the success of the peace accord.

The accod itself has not been working as it should. The Indians underestimated the strength of the Tamil Tigers and the process of disarming them has been a costly exercise for the IPKF, resulting in more than 350 soldiers killed and more than 1,000 wounded. Civilian casualties in the Indian operations and the hostility of the Sri Lankan Tamils, who had once regarded Indian troops as protectors, have added to New Delhi's problems.

Jayewardene has to contend with growing domestic fear that Indian troops intend to remain much longer than they should and that the peace-keeping force will eventually become an army of occupation. He knows very well that the Indian presence will be a key issue at the elections and would very much like the IPKF to complete its task and pull out before the parliamentary and presidential elections expected within the next 12 months. During his stay in New Delhi, Gandhi told Sri Lankan national TV that it was up to Jayewardene alone to decide when Indian troops should pull out. This, from the point of view of the Colombo government, was a most positive statement and has been widely publicised in Sri Lanka.

Gandhi and Jayewardene: complete trust. AP

Colombo was anxious to sign with New Delhi a treaty of friendship and co-operation modelled on the Indo-Soviet treaty, which would include reciprocal obligations. The intention, from Jayewardene's point of view, was to get rid of what many Sri Lankans perceive to be inequities in the July accord. Although the Indian External Affairs Ministry has been cool on the idea of a treaty, Gandhi himself has said that he had no reservations about signing such an agreement with Sri Lanka.

At the conclusion of the visit, Jayewardene told reporters that the draft submitted by Colombo will be discussed at length during the coming months and the next round of treaty talks would be held before the June elections for the Sri Lankan provincial councils. Having the treaty signed before parliamentary elections, which most observers believe would precede the presidential election, would be a useful campaign plank for Jayewardene.

At home the president has rapped Premadasa — whose recent public speeches have not been entirely to Jayewardene's liking — by dropping two strong Premadasa supporters from the UNP working committee. He also obtained finance minister Ronnie de Mel's resignation for what he regarded as a lack of "loyalty" to a five-year-old cabinet decision to hold a referendum in December 1982 to extend the term of the incumbent parliament. De Mel said in parliament in December that he had been opposed to the referendum to which he attributed many of the country's present problems. Despite the fact that replacing de Mel, a gifted technocrat, was a major problem, Jayewardene clearly felt that cabinet and party discipline was more important.

Obviously, the president intends to show the country that he will be calling the shots in the remaining months of his tenure. He has reiterated that it is his constitutional prerogative to decide when to hold a parliamentary election and, despite pressure from the opposition as well as a public demand by de Mel, he has chosen not to reveal his hand on election timing.

Before leaving New Delhi he told the press that the presidential election will be held by the end of this year or early January 1989. When to hold a parliamentary election, he said, is "my decision" and he had not made up his mind on whether to schedule it before or after the presidential election, he said. But most observers agree that Jayewardene will hold the parliamentary polls while he is still in office so that he can appoint the next cabinet. Jayewardene, who will turn 82 in September, has declared that he will not seek another term, but he has not indicated which of the UNP aspirants he will support as his successor.

RAPED

19.2.88	Vakaneri/Batticoloa	One young girl
20.2.88	Nedunkeni Camp	7 girls (Among them Bhagyam and Vijayalatha were feared dead. Vasanthi who was brutally raped was a mother of 3 months old baby).
25.2.88	Mullaithivu – Nedunkeni	5 girls

INDIA AS MAJOR REGIONAL POWER

COMMENT

Castrated sovereignty. That is all that Sri Lanka is left with under President J.R.Jayewardene. The former Minister of Finance claims that 'Finlandization' of the island is a small price to pay for India's intervention. We argue that, far from "Finlandization" (in Finland the Soviets cannot go too far because NATO watches developments), India has "Sikkimized" Sri Lanka; and Gandhi tries to make of Jayewardene a "Chogyal" (the ruler of Sikkim), a ruler who does the bidding of his Imperial master with canine docility. Meanwhile, the castrated sovereign like the castaway pig is fattened for the slaughter. That is the significance of the recent durbar in New Delhi when President Jayewardene was chief guest on India's Republic Day. Sri Lanka today is in the grip of an Oriental despotism, one of whose features, to quote Suzanne Hoeber Rudolph, is a genre of "Sultanism" where "the servile subject" is "dependent, infantilized, obedient, without public voice or identity." So Sri Lanka has no V.O.A (Voice Of America), no right to let her ports be used by foreign powers and must send back all her foreign military training advisors.

BALANCE OF POWER

This Indian Accord is heralded as a triumph of regional hegemonial stability by Moscow and Washington. Some politicalised Indians and Indian newspapers hail Gandhi for his diplomatic triumph. But let us be the proverbial Cassandra, the bringer of bad tidings. In World politics, no single power has for long been permitted to hold unchallenged sway. The manoeuvring to bring such a power within the international state system begins on the day it claims regional superiority. We have forgotten too early and too soon, the British concept of "balance of power." Whenever Spain, France or Germany sought hegemony over Europe, British statesmen ensured a return to a balance of power so that Europe will remain in equilibrium.

TYRO AND NOVICE IN POLITICS

This we boldly predict is what will happen to India in Gandhi's dalliance with the Grand Old Man of South Asia. **Our prediction is that President Jayewardene will win against the tyro and novice in politics, Rajiv Gandhi.** Soon Jayewardene will have Gandhi tied in knots over his so-called Accord. Indian troops will have increasing problems in Sri Lanka. And who will restore the balance of power in the sub-continent?

Britain ensured that Philip's Spain (the defeat of the Armada), Napoleon Bonaparte's France and Hitler's Germany were cut to size when they sought regional hegemony. The United States, the super power that it is, is under the surveillance of Fidel Castro, Nicaragua and other potential anti-U.S. rulers in Latin and Central America. How can India be provided unrestricted freedom to impose her hegemony over a South Asia of states antipathetic to Delhi's pretentions to imperialism?

CORRUPT CLIQUE

The signals are all too clear. It is unstable for the world system to have a currupt clique in New Delhi (Bofors and all that) to remain unchallenged. It has never before happened in world politics. The U.S. has given its sanction because its hands are full with the Afghan mess and the Gulf war. **Pakistan remains an angry onlooker. And every neighbour of India - Nepal, Burma, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and most importantly, the People's Republic of China, are observing events as Gandhi's intervention in the domestic affairs of a neighbour becomes plainly evident.**

India, according to our reading of the situation, will sooner than later be brought in line. In effect a balance of power will be restored in the region. The U.S. will soon be freed of the Afghan problem. Pakistan will invent its nuclear device. The People's Republic has still to settle border

ILLUSTRATION BY RAMAKRISHNA SALVI

problems with Imperial India. Khalistan, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura have to be pacified. What are 100,000 Indian troops playing around in Sri Lanka? The people of Sri Lanka, Sinhalese and Tamils, abhor the Indian presence. President Jayewardene is reportedly conducting talks with the LTTE leadership. He has already made contact with Mahatiya, Deputy leader of the Tigers. Our forecast is that President Jayewardene will succeed in outflanking Gandhi. Gandhi's skit on the world stage is only a brief interlude. He will have to beat a hasty retreat from the shores of Sri Lanka. We Tamils and our traditional enemies, the Sinhalese, can then fight it out and come to a settlement. Gandhi should read Neville Maxwell's INDIA'S CHINA WAR, that is, if ever he stops reading the signals that he used to when he was a commercial pilot.

The Week

REPORT

Medals and memories

Enemy not identified while giving gallantry awards

Highest honour. *Bana Singh and Ramaswamy Parameshwaran (posthumous), the Param Vir Chakra recipients*

"WE started from the outskirts of Jaffna outside the municipal limits and cleared the Tigers from the entire stretch of the coastal road. We linked up with the garrison holed up in the Jaffna fort, on October 19," said Brig. Manjit Singh to a group of newsmen visiting Jaffna, recalling the bitter battle which earned him a Maha Vir Chakra on Republic Day.

The brigadier's achievement is all the more impressive if one takes into account that the 41 brigade which he led, which was part of the five-column thrust launched by the IPKF, had been airlifted only on October 17 and was pushed straight into battle. The fighting was quite vicious—there were 272 casualties. The citation of the award mentions that Manjit Singh led from the front regardless of personal safety, displayed conspicuous gallantry in the face of the enemy, and inspired his men to advance through a cordon, thrown by the LTTE, which sprung from virtually every other house.

Eight soldiers have been awarded the Maha Vir Chakra, and the Param Vir Chakra, the highest gallantry award, has been won by two—Maj. Ramaswamy Parameswaran who laid down his life in Sri Lanka, and Naik Subedar Bana Singh for clearing an intrusion in Siachen, at an altitude of 21,000 feet. Another 37 persons have been awarded the Vir Chakra. This is the first time after the 1971 war that soldiers have been decorated for gallantry in battle.

There were no doubts that the awards were well deserved. What, however, created a sense of uneasiness was the fact that the government was caught in the web of its own contradiction. In Siachen, the soldiers were fighting an old enemy. But now with these awards the government has admitted that LTTE in Sri Lanka is an 'enemy'.

> The 4/5 Gorkhas which won four Maha Vir Chakras and six Vir Chakras has lost 70 men in Sri Lanka. Whereas in the 1965 war it lost 30 men and in 1971 its casualties were 28.

Notwithstanding that, there is no gainsaying the gallantry of our soldiers. Maj. Ramaswamy Parameshwaran of 8 Mahar was returning on the night of November 25 after search operations when his column was ambushed by the Tamil rebels. Despite being shot in the chest, he rallied his men, stood his ground, cleared the ambush and breathed his last. Five militants also died in the fighting. The Indian soldiers seized three rifles and two rocket launchers.

In fact it is these acts of gallantry that have saved the Indian army from a loss of reputation. It is also to be borne in mind that our soldiers were fighting an enemy on the latter's terrain.

The column led by Brig. Manjit Singh, for instance, came to the rescue of the beleaguered Maratha light infantry troops, led by Col. T.P.S. Brar, holed up in Jaffna fort. "The hostilities began on October 10. At 14.30 hrs, 60 to 70 Tigers descended from buses, started firing and advanced towards us. We returned the fire and tried to break the cordon. In the process we suffered heavy casualties and had to retreat into the fort. The exchange of fire carried on till 8 p.m.," said Col. Brar. From then on, till December 19 when the 41 brigade linked up with Brar's men the Tamil Tigers mounted a series of attacks every morning and every evening. Soldiers in the fort told this reporter in October that when they tried to advance from the fort, they came under fire from the Tigers entrenched in well-defended positions all around the fort. The Dutch-built Jaffna fort is surrounded by Regal cinema, a public library, a stadium, and other public buildings.

While Brig. Manjit Singh was honoured for leading the fastest charge through Jaffna, Brig. T.S. Dhillon, who

headed the 18 brigade, was given the Yudh Seva medal, introduced recently for distinguished service during war, conflict or hostilities. Dhillon told visiting newsmen at Navarkully, the well-fortified LTTE training camp from where the army seized a huge arms dump: "We surprised the Tigers. If they had succeeded in blowing up the arms dump, it would have led to a colossal loss of human lives in the civilian areas surrounding the camp." The brigade had begun its march from Kopai north, some seven kilometres from Navarkully, to seal a crucial exit point on the seaside, often made use of by LTTE. Initially its progress was slow because of fierce resistance. Navarkully was finally taken on the night of October 22.

The largest number of Maha Vir Chakras—four out of a total eight—were claimed by the men of 4/5 Gorkha Rifles. As part of 72 brigade, they had started their march from Palaly base where the 54 division, the core of the IPKF, had set up tactical headquarters. The battalion moved towards Jaffna, and, after fierce resistance, linked up with the troops brought in by helicopters to hold the university campus. Advancing behind three tanks, the battalion came under fire at Arumparai and lost their commanding officer, Lt.-Col. Inderpal Singh Bawa. He has been awarded the Maha Vir Chakra posthumously. "The Gorkhas went berserk when they found that their commanding officer had fallen," said an army officer in Jaffna.

Others of the Gorkha Rifles who won the Maha Vir Chakra are Maj. Krishna Gopal Chatterjee, Lance Havildar Nar Bahadur Ale and Naik Prem Bahadur Gurung (the last two posthumously).

Six Vir Chakras were won by the Gorkha Rifles—Maj. Anil Deepak Gardner, who had the flesh of his leg blown off by a Claymore mine, Maj. Nud Singh who died instantly after being hit in the head, Lance Naik Hira Bahadur Thapa (posthumous), Naik Hom Bahadur Thapa, Naik Subedar Bhim Bahadur Thapa and Subedar Prem Bahadur Thapa.

Among the medal winners men of the 8 Mahar came next to the Gorkhas—apart from Maj. Ramaswamy Parameshwaran's Param Vir Chakra, the 8 Mahar won a Maha Vir Chakra (Maj. P.S. Ganapathy) and two Vir Chakras (Cap. Sunil Chander and Havildar Pandurang Kakpale).

Gallant deeds. *Ganapathy, Manjit Singh and Chatterjee (all Maha Vir Chakras)*

Honour in death. *Prem Bahadur, Singh Bawa and Nar Bahadur*

While winning the four Maha Vir Chakras and six Vir Chakras the 4/5 Gorkhas have lost 70 men in Sri Lanka. Their performance during 1965 and 1971 full-scale wars was only a shade less gallant. While capturing the strategic Topa post in Jammu's Rajouri sector in 1965, the 4/5 Gorkhas had suffered only 30 casualties. In 1971, deployed in Sylhet, their casualties were 28, but they collected two Maha Vir Chakras and two Vir Chakras besides other battle honours.

> That the armed forces have to go about choosing their words carefully, while honouring their men, is symptomatic of the political quagmire the government has created for itself.

In the undeclared war in Siachen and Sri Lanka, two Param Vir Chakras were awarded—about the same number as in 1965. In the 1971 war which led to the creation of Bangladesh, four Param Vir Chakras, 76 Maha Vir Chakras and 493 Vir Chakras were awarded. In the 1965 war 18 Maha Vir Chakras and 58 Vir Chakras were awarded.

In the citation of the current series of awards, the enemy is not identified but referred to as 'militants' in Sri Lanka and 'adversary' in Siachen. That the armed forces have to go about choosing their words carefully, even while giving their men the well-deserved honours, is symptomatic of the political quagmire the government has created for itself.

FEB. 7–13, 1988 —G.K. SINGH

INDIA TODAY

REPORT

Attacking the Accord

Anti-IPKF sentiment scales a new high

THERE could have been no greater irony than Sri Lankan President J.R. Jayewardene's presence as chief guest at India's Republic Day parade last fortnight. With internal opposition to the Indo-Sri Lankan accord snowballing alarmingly in recent weeks, New Delhi now has the added worry of the political survival of the ageing leader.

The contretemps plaguing the accord has regenerated the anti-accord lobby in Sri Lanka. Now, as Jayewardene enters the final year of his presidency, the pastiche of forces ranged against him is pushing him to the penumbra of isolation. As the venerable pro-accord, leftist leader of Sri Lanka, Dr Colvin de Silva remarked: "Jayewardene now stands more isolated than he ever was since he came to power 10 years ago."

A manifestation of this alienation was the resignation of the high-profile finance minister, Ronnie de Mel, from the Cabinet on January 18. De Mel was both a loyal lieutenant of Jayewardene and an ardent supporter of the accord. Yet, he deliberately invited presidential penal action with his outcry in Parliament: "We must hold elections before the people get up and say, 'in God's name, go'." Leader of the Opposition Anura Bandaranaike said: "Ronnie is the most intelligent weathercock in the politics of Sri Lanka. He knows which way the wind is blowing." Significantly, in 1976, de Mel quit the ruling Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) to join Jayewardene's United National Party (UNP). The elections that followed immediately after saw the routing of the SLFP.

Said de Mel after his resignation: "The faltering of the accord since September brought about a loss of face for those of us who supported the accord and provided grist to those who were opposed to it." Indeed, in the last few months, despite Jayewardene's absolute control over the party, cabinet ministers have become increasingly strident in their criticism. On December 31, in a public speech riddled with anti-Jayewardene innuendo, Prime Minister R. Premadasa asked: "Why should the neighbour be brought to scold our quarrelling children?" And, in Parliament, National Security Minister Lalith Athulathmudali declared: "The people want the IPKF (the Indian Peace Keeping Force) to go."

The swelling numbers of the IPKF and its prolonged stay have created a grave psychosis in Sri Lanka. Nobody buys the line that India came to protect the Tamils. Said the ebullient Athulathmudali: "Let's face it. The experience all over the world is that external forces come to a country to pursue their own ends." This view was endorsed by the Tamils and Sinhalese alike. Cocktail and diplomatic circles in Colombo are abuzz with rumours of the IPKF's intended five-year stay—fuelled by reports that the IPKF has been leasing houses in Jaffna for five years.

Ironically, the presence of the IPKF has brought a new unity in Sri Lankan society, cutting through political, ethnic, social, and economic barriers. Said Premadasa: "From Jaffna to Sangamanthuduwa, people want the IPKF to leave."

But despite the sudden change in the scenario, there is no immediate danger of the Jayewardene Government collapsing. Gamini Jayasuriya, who resigned from the Cabinet on the issue of the accord observed: "Ninety-five per cent of the MPs are unhappy. But they will stay with Jayewardene because they shrink out of power."

There is also no denying Jayewardene's alarming alienation from the public. The general feeling is one of betrayal and the President is blamed for the feeling of insecurity that exists. The accord now serves as a catalyst for the people's desire for change—they want elections. Sensing this mood, many ministers have chosen to go with the public. In fact, resentment over the accord, corruption, and the overdue elections have triggered off a realignment of forces in Sri Lankan politics. The most visible manifestation of this is the attempt by such diverse elements as the SLFP, Ronnie de Mel, and Premadasa to win over the outlawed Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) that has created a wave of terror in the south. So strong is public opinion against the President, that a senior minister admitted: "If elections are held now, the UNP would undoubtedly be defeated."

Jayewardene's only chance of sur-

PRASHANT PANJIAR

The *leitmotiv* of Jayewardene's visit was to assuage Sinhala fears by negotiating for the IPKF's withdrawal and for a treaty to ensure reciprocal relations between the two nations.

vival is to make the accord work. Like Rajiv Gandhi, he has a personal stake in the accord: it is the only way he can hope to salvage his credibility and defuse public hostility. Rajiv and Jayewardene need each other's cooperation more than ever before. The *leitmotiv* of Jayewardene's six-day sojourn in New Delhi last week was to assuage Sinhala fears on two scores: one, to evolve a time frame for the early return of the IPKF—an obsession with all Sri Lankans; the second issue was to arrive closer to a treaty so that Sri Lankans feel there is reciprocity in the relations between the two countries.

The President has come in for sharp criticism due to the public perception that while he is committed to Sri Lankan ports not being used for anti-Indian activity, he has not succeeded in getting India to reciprocate. This is seen as an unpardonable presidential lapse in view of the fact that Tamil Nadu has in the past been used as a training ground and supply base for the Tamil militants.

But even the signing of a treaty will not obfuscate the fact that the accord is in trouble. The peace process was to have been crowned with elections to the provincial councils, slated to be held before December 1987. The ground reality is that the IPKF is yet to disarm the Tigers who have regrouped themselves effectively in the east, particularly in Batticaloa. While the stranglehold of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in Jaffna has been broken, the IPKF has a long way to go to declaw the Tigers in the northern and eastern provinces.

The east in fact, now increasingly holds the key to the future of the accord—and Sri Lanka. Says Dew Gunasekhara, a communist MP: "The real hot-spot is the eastern province and not Jaffna." Adds Athulathmudali: "My fear is that the accord will leave the east in a shambles."

Unlike the north which is Tamil-dominated, the east is far more complex—in terms of area, terrain and demographic composition—it is inhabited by Tamils, Muslims and Sinhalese. Admits Dr Nissanka Wijeyeratna, minister for justice: "It will take a long time to complete the work of peace and restore normalcy in the east." Already there are Tamil, Sinhalese and, in the post-accord phase, Muslim refugees in the east.

The Tamils consider the east as part of their homeland. However, due to Sinhala colonisation by successive governments, it is likely that the proposed referendum in the east will go against a merger as the Sinhalese view it as the first step to Eelam. On the eve of signing the accord, the Tamils' fears about a referendum were allayed by Indian officials who referred to another clause in the accord wherein the referendum could be postponed at the discretion of the President. The behind-the-scene assurance was that India could persuade Jayewardene to postpone the referendum indefinitely.

Such assurances may seem ingenious but they rarely work. Jayewardene, whose political acumen and cunning are legendary, is unlikely to remain content as a pawn in India's hands. He would like to hold the referendum and wrap up the ethnic problem before he leaves the political stage.

As far as long-term peace is concerned, it is a no-win situation, even if a referendum is held. If it goes against a merger, the LTTE will continue its armed struggle to regain "lost territory". If it is for a merger, the Muslims and Sinhalese will agitate, as most of them do not want to be ruled by the Jaffna Tamils. Already a Sinhala riot group is active in Trincomalee. And the Muslims of the east—who form 30 per cent of the Muslim population in the entire country—have formed a congress that projects an eastern outlook. According to a senior minister in the Cabinet: "This new Muslim organisation is establishing contacts with Libya and Iran for support." As Anura Bandaranaike said: "You bring the north and east together with the accord. Then you separate them with a referendum. This is going to bring about total chaos."

The resignation of high-profile finance minister Ronnie de Mel, an ardent supporter of the accord, has exposed Jayewardene's growing isolation from his cabinet and the public.

Since mid-January, civil administration in the northern and eastern provinces has come to a standstill. Public servants have been killed (M.M. Maqbul, the government agent of Mannar, was shot dead on January 22 while he was going to Talaimannar to make arrangements for the resettlement of refugees arriving from Rameshwaram). The LTTE is holding Tamil civilians hostage to terror. The secretariat, courts and administration offices have no attendance. Threats are issued on handbills, posters and often personally.

Meanwhile, Jayewardene has kept his part of the agreement by passing the Provincial Councils' Election Bill in Parliament. As a South Block official admitted: "At the risk of his life, Jayewardene stuck to his end of the bargain. It is India that has failed to deliver."

Surreptitious moves for direct talks between the Sri Lankan Government and the LTTE are now being made. Said G.G. Ponnambalam, leader of the All-Ceylon Tamil Congress who tried to arrange a meeting between the LTTE and Gamini

Dissanayake in Madras on January 12: "Avenues through India have dried up, so fresh avenues have to be opened." Indian officials confirm that the Sri Lankan Government was trying to initiate talks with the LTTE through Dissanayake as well as through Lalith Athulathmudali. Said Ponnambalam: "Gamini, an LTTE leader and I met on January 5 at the Mahaweli office in Colombo and we decided to meet a week later at Madras. Gamini in fact, secured presidential assent for this meeting. But the Indian High Commission here sabotaged it." Predictably, India feels that direct talks would be detrimental to its interests. Athulathmudali is open about his involvement in direct talks. He asked: "Why can't I talk to my citizens?" Another ruling party MP added: "They shouldn't discourage direct talks because it is the people of this country who should ultimately find the solution to the problem."

(From left) Athulathmudali, Premadasa, Dissanayake: main contenders

The Sri Lankan Government hopes to offer the LTTE control of the Jaffna peninsula with the Sri Lankan Army taking up their July 28 position in the east. There is a section in the Government that feels this offer could be buttressed by greater devolution, but without a merger. The east would have its province which would in turn, devolve greater powers to three separate Pradeshiya Sabhas for the Tamils, Muslims, and Sinhalese.

The structural flaw of this line of thinking is that even if the LTTE agrees to this proposal for tactical reasons, it will still continue its armed struggle in the east. Sri Lankan authorities are fully aware of this but are confident of tackling and bringing under control the situation. For, in such a scenario, India having burnt her fingers badly, would not support the Tamil Tigers.

If the accord fails to yield results, the move for direct talks will gather momentum. The immediate task before New Delhi is to restore normalcy so that provincial elections can be held. While the IPKF has broken the LTTE's stranglehold in Jaffna, the Tigers continue to have the men, muscle and firepower to disrupt life in the northern and eastern provinces.

To crush the LTTE in the east, India is now going to opt for a saturation exercise. There are currently 37,000 Indian troops on Sri Lankan soil. They intend to raise it to 60,000 so that by April, LTTE resistance in the northern and eastern provinces can be neutralised. The thinking now is that elections to the provincial councils can be held in May which would necessarily have to be policed by the IPKF. A phased withdrawal of the

Bandaranaike: fresh challenge

IPKF could begin the following month so that finally, only a token presence is left. Jayewardene wants the withdrawal of the IPKF before the parliamentary elections. For, as Sweerasinghe Mallimarachchi, a ruling party MP pointed out: "The IPKF presence is a political embarrassment for the UNP."

With parliamentary and presidential elections slated to be held later this year, the stirrings of a succession struggle can already be seen in the UNP. Premadasa, who is number two in the party, would seem to be the natural choice. But the inscrutable Jayewardene, who still wields absolute control over the party, is keeping the principal contenders—Premadasa, Athulathmudali and Dissanayake—on tenterhooks. Rumours are already circulating that he might eventually pave the way for his son Ravi, or brother, Hector to succeed him.

Meanwhile, the SLFP has already declared Sirimavo Bandaranaike as its presidential candidate. "As far as the accord is concerned, India should not depend too much on Jayewardene. He is old and he is unpopular," says Anura Bandaranaike. So confident are SLFP members of coming to power on an anti-government wave, that they no longer talk in terms of "if" but of "when" they come to power.

The key question, however, is what happens to the accord in the context of a change of guard, particularly in view of the anti-accord stand of the SLFP and Jayewardene's own possible successors? As an Indian official put it: "If the SLFP comes to power, we'll do business with them. Jayewardene is a natural ally because he is the signatory, but the events of the last four years cannot cloud the fact that India has traditionally had close ties with the SLFP." In characteristic opposition bravura, Anura Bandaranaike declared publicly: "If we come to power, we will send the IPKF packing in 24 hours." He later admitted that total withdrawal of the IPKF may not be possible but that the SLFP would definitely strive to reduce its number.

Despite public posturings, even seemingly virulent anti-Indian Sinhala politicians concede: "Friendship with India has to be the cornerstone of Sri Lanka's foreign policy." India is recognised, though grudgingly, as the regional superpower. A hostile India can easily foment trouble in the north and east through the Tamil guerrillas. An anti-Indian Sri Lankan Government could be inextricably trapped between the anvil of Tamil insurgency in the north and the hammer of JVP terrorism in the south. No government can hope to survive the resulting turbulence and anarchy. As an Indian official put it: "If the Government doesn't honour the package and insists on the premature withdrawal of the IPKF, Sri Lanka will be divided. Only this accord can keep the country together." That conclusion is, right now, the only hope the accord has of success.

—ANITA PRATAP in Colombo

FEBRUARY 15, 1988

OPINION

An old soldier on Sri Lanka

Jaswant Singh

OUR home is some distance removed from the village, a collection of huts, seemingly grown out of the soil, and that too because the seed of need would not be defeated by the chimerical hope of waiting for a better year. In our parts, such habitations are not unusual, people move off and relocate themselves, for convenience, directly on the land that they till. It is a practical way of coping with the distances involved. The desert is so spatial. We have neither electricity nor

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running water, both of which absences I find blissfully restful, to the great chagrin of my folk, who consider such an attitude as their principal obstacle in the path of 'progress' — whenever they learn that I have arrived, from wherever, they drop in, as fancy pleases them, from dawn till sunset, to exchange greetings, to get news of the 'outside', to share difficulties, to complain, occasionally to request for intervention against the gelatinous insensitivity of our state.

Risaldar Major (hony capt) Khangar Singh, I.O.M. Vr. C. — to give an old friend of this column his full due — came one such morning to visit me. The distance from the village being almost four miles, most elderly gents ride out but this doughty had chosen to walk. He is now in his eighties, had campaigned his famous 'Risala' all through the North African campaign, with four Indian division, then into Italy and the grim battle for Monte Casino, won his first award for gallantary there. Again in 1948 in J and K, and then in 1965 in the Punjab. The village has none other to match his service record, but many more have also proudly served the colours. This, in any case, is one of the principal recruiting grounds, of sturdy, self-reliant yeomanry, Khangar Singh, erect of body and undaunted in spirit, it became fairly apparent to me, was troubled in mind that morning. Courtesy, in our rural society, demands that one does not abruptly blurt out what is uppermost on one's mind, you arrive upon it gradually, at the convenience of the host. This is not evasion, nor lack of forthrightness. On the contrary, it is reticence born only out of consideration.

To put him at his ease, I took him into the sunnier part of the open courtyard, where spreading an old goat hair durrie, I offered him tea and opium. He had only lately taken to opium. "It steadies me up and gives me a good sleep," he said. He admired the intricate weave of the durrie, then ritually rued the loss of craftsmen to towns and to government jobs ("because they do not have to work in them") and fell into the ruminant silence of the troubled.

"What' news of Dalpat," I asked tentatively, his only son, educated after considerable sacrifice on the old man's part, is now a commissioned officer in his old regiment, on whom both parents dote. "Very well," he informed me proudly, immediately brightening up," doing his duty to his regiment and to the 'mulk'. The 'Risaldarni.' As mothers would, frets about him now and then, but I tell her off. He is doing only that which every soldier must thrill upon being asked to: to fight the country's enemies."

Here he fell silent, sipped his tea and let the opiate spread soothingly through his veins. Then, hesitantly: "but tell me, saheb, who actually is our enemy in Sri Lanka?" I was not entirely unprepared, so went through the usual, elaborate spiel on the complexity of the situation, and how vital it was that Sri Lanka remained a united country, which they could not, not without our assistance. Also that if we had not, the Prime Minister says Pakistan would have sent their forces there. Khangar Singh listened with extreme care to what I was saying, but even as I went through my piece, I realised that I had lost him somewhere. So I stopped. He immediately countered. "If Lanka cannot remain united but for the assistance of our *'fauj'* then they cannot be kept united by us.

Deeply troubled

A life time of soldiering makes it impossible for him to make lengthy statements, or to argue. But obviously, he was troubled deeply, for he continued: "You know, saheb, I am either a soldier or nothing. Now I cannot be anything but an old 'fauji'. I have always trusted and obeyed the word of my superior officer and of my 'sarkar'. Now I am troubled, because no one settles my doubts. You too, you lecture me, but do not answer a simple question — who is our enemy in Sri Lanka? Who is that 'Ravana'? Do you know why that is so important? Because at night, quite, often, I wonder what today's young commanding officers are telling their men when asking them to go into battle?"

I did my best: all about how after initially going in support of the Tamils, we were forced to take up arms against them, how we were now clearing guerilla elements etc. "This is criminal of our sarkar," said the old man. "Why did they at first give arms and training to this gang and create a potential enemy?" I remained silent, for there was really nothing that I could say. Khangar Singh realised he had scored a point, so he pressed home his advantage, but gently. "You know much more about such things than I do, but even then I can say that all this talk about Pakistani troops to Lanka is not a military man talking. They could do so only at the cost of leaving Sind or Punjab empty. Which one would they chose — and for Lanka? Then to supply Lanka from Karachi. How? No, I am not convinced. I might be just an old JCO, but I have fought three wars and I do know something about military matters."

No way out

I emphasised that at times great countries, in exercise of the responsibility of their greatness, have to undertake tasks which draw deeply upon their resources of nationhood. He assented immediately but added a practical and wise caveat. "Greatness does not come by demanding, by boasting, it is conferred by others. And great countries never leave themselves without a clear withdrawal route, any tank commander will tell you that." After a pause, "Dalpat writes and says that our *fauj* under command of the Lanka 'sarkar.' Is that so?" Yet again, I attempted to explain the complexities, but his soldier's mind would not grasp them, for he was used to seeing things in stark colours, not in the confused hues of diplomatic compromise. "Well, that may be so, but I am sure, our chief saheb could not be entirely happy."

The finality of the statement had really no counter, so again, I kept quiet. "Going to battle, saheb, is my earliest memory. Always, in every operation, we were made much of, feted, and our troop trains acclaimed wherever we went: sharbat, khana — everything. Even Shankar Seth, with whom you know my relations, garlanded me. Our *fauj* has been in Sri Lanka now for four months, no one in the village praises them. But what disturbs me more is that none understands what we are doing there either. Already between us and Shergarh district, there are eleven killed. That is as it will be, they have obtained *vergatti*, but why are there no *Jalsas, Fauji-darbars* and public acclamation of *Jangi inams?* I know from personal experience that you cannot fight in a foreign country unless at least some from amongst those *log* stand by you. It alarms me that our *fauj* today has got no friends in Lanka."

Nothing worse

I had to, in all honesty, again accept what Khangar Singh said whereupon somewhat emboldened, he said. "I remain troubled: tell me, truthfully, are today's *faujis* actually asking questions about the operations?"

I tried to explain to him that the army to which he had belonged was of the past. It no longer existed, and for soldiers to raise valid queries is not, after all, such a bad thing. He had got his answer in my evasion itself, so he responded with some finality: "You 'netas' have failed our 'mulk' very badly, yet again. You have not just let the *fauj* down, you have done much worse — but I cannot sully my mouth with those words. Tell them in your *Dilli*, that being rendered a casualty or dying is of no great consequence to a soldier, it is his 'moksha'. But if you are unhappy, then you do not die willingly. And for a soldier to die unwillingly, is a fate worse than being thrown in *narka*."

Indian Express 2.2.88

LANKA GUARDIAN

DELHI TALKS

COMMENT

FROM REVIEW TO RE-NEGOTIATION

Mervyn de Silva

July 29 — January 29. Exactly 6 months. Time to review the Gandhi-Jayawardene Peace Accord. How has it worked! How is it working or not working? What are the snags? Who or what is responsible? How best can these impediments be removed to mutual advantage and to improve and speed-up implementation, with the pact running far behind the scheduled December 31 provincial polls date.

Such questions and the ceremony of review and re-appraisal are a natural part of a bilateral inter-state exercise. Mr. Gandhi took the Indian Republic Day as the most obvious occasion on which to conduct that operation, with January 26 offering the additional advantage of honouring his co-signatory, (and fellow Nobel Prize nominee) by making him Chief Guest at the lavish spectacular ceremonies. President JR's hurried 2 day stay in Delhi on the way back from the SAARC summit allowed the two leaders time only to raise questions, not to examine them carefully or find answers. So formal occasion, ceremonial honours and mutual political-diplomatic need meshed perfectly.

Transcending all these natural interests and consideration was each leader's need to cosolidate whatever he had gained from the Accord, and if possible, recover whatever he had lost, or as much of it as possible. In the gain-loss equation, the 'loss factor' was plainly the bigger component in the Sri Lankan part of the July 29 transaction. Not only because Sri Lanka is fundementally the weaker, contracting party but the actual circumstances — the post-Vadamarachi-Air-drop situation — increased this weakness. Thus, the actual terms of the transaction reflected this gross disparity in bargaining power. Indeed if the essentially domestic part of the deal (the devolution deal or the settlement of the ethnic issue) deserves that delightful American expression, a 'shot-gun' wedding, the state-to-state (or foreign policy) part of the transaction was, in Colombo's eyes, pure gun-at-your-head highway-man stuff. So from the Sri Lankan viewpoint, the Delhi talks were more than a review and critical re-assessment of what had happened since July 1987. There was an attempt at re-negotiation.

Logically the approach by both sides was based on what had already happened. For both, the situation on the ground was the starting point. However, there was a changed or changing perception of the entire situation, not just the situation in the north-and-east, the IPKF's area of operation and its exclusive responsibility, but of the South, the JVP challenge, the significance of Ronnie de Mel's resignation and growing divisions in the UNP (**See "Three Frontrunners" from a report in the F. E. E. R. by its Colombo correspondent Manik de Silva, who is editor of Sri Lanka's leading daily, the state-owned 'Daily News'**). But more important than these developments is the general demand for Presidential and parliamentary polls, the rising anti-UNP opinion, and the re-appearance of Mrs. Bandaranaike as a key player in the unfolding Sri Lankan drama.

Symptomatic of this major change in Delhi opinion is chorus of increasingly critical voices in the influential Indian press, many of them authoritative editorial voices, and some generally pro-government. This would certainly be true of the *TIMES OF INDIA*. Secondly, these voices sound like alarm bells. And idealogically, they range from the conservative *STATESMEN* to the leftwing *MAINSTREAM*, edited by the most highly regarded editor in the country, Nikhil Chakravarthy.

Noting the "fragility of the Government in Colombo" as the most disturbing aspect "of the Batticola jail break, the *TIMES OF INDIA* wondered whether "coherent government" is "on the verge of breaking down".

"The Sri Lanka government is already under attack from within, the internal divisions are widening, and the opposition Sri Lanka Freedom Party is calling for the absorption of members of the outlawed Janata Vimukti Peramuna (JVP) in the political mainstream, in contrast to President Jayewardene who wants to crush that organisation out of existence. Is coherent government then, on the verge of breaking down in Sri Lanka? It may seem alarmist even to ask the question, but the way things are going on the island gives cause for the outmost concern in India In particular, what is the IPKF's role to be? Will it end up propping up a shaky government under siege from its domestic critics, including many within its own ranks? It is vital that New Delhi reassesses its political strategy in view of the troubles assailing the Jayewardene government."

In other words, the Indian press has awakened not merely to the vital political significance of the 'Southern dimension' but to the central issue of democracy, and the integral connection between coflicts in Sri Lanka and its post-1982 'closed system'. In that sense, it has become suddenly aware of a major flaw in its analysis and understanding of the Sri Lankan conflict. Though the awakening is belated, it is more than pardonable. Our own analysts', preoccupied with the strictly ethnic issue and devolution as the answer to the problem — a preoccupation that may have been a mere byproduct of intellectual conditioning rather than the self-serving imposition which critics of the 'ethnic studies' approach allege — have been guilty of the same error.

Thus, the importance the Indian press attached to Mr. Ronnie de Mel. An editorial in the *Statesman* notes:

"Even a cursory glance at Mr. de Mel's record as Finance Minister that far from being a hardliner who believes in a scorched earth military offensive against the recalcitrant Tamil militants, he was in the front line arguing for a negotiated

settlement on the grounds that Sri Lanka could not afford a civil war. In fact, when the Indo-Sri Lankan accord was signed on July 29, Mr. de Mel and Mr. Gamini Dissanayake were the only Ministers whom President Jayewardene took into his confidence. That even someone who risked the wrath of the Sinhalese hardliners by urging moderation when Colombo clearly thought it unfashionable to do so has now said farewell to the Government is a pointer to the growing perceptions of disaster and to President Jayewardene's complete isolation".

It is not as the region's paramount power but as the world's largest democracy that India faces a painful predicament. It is a peculiarly American one. Does one dump a trusted partner if, by lossing his legitimacy, he can become a liability? Or does one tighten the protective embrace, running the attendant risk of mutual damage. Is discreet distancing the shrewder option? If so, when and how? The questions can be troublesome when the major partner's professed ideal, democracy, and his perceived self-interest coincide to recommend a course hostile to the dependent ally.

The *STATESMAN*, founded in 1818, is an old-fashioned and somewhat staid defender of democratic institutions. It is this perspective it brings to bear on the totality of the Sri Lankan situation, a totality which had eluded the Indian, and more conspicuously, the Tamilnadu press, — the *Hindu*, being the most glaring example. While such partial viewpoints and analytical approaches were quite natural and understandable in the case of the *Hindu*, required reading for the English-educated Sri Lankan, this could hardly be said for the Sri Lankan specialist observers of Indian politics and India's Sri Lanka policy.

Both persist in another error — identifying the 'Southern dimension' wholly with the J. V. P. In equating the two, ideological prejudice, sometimes pathological tends once more to distort judgments. The *Statesman*, resding the de Mel resignation in objective terms, locates and corrects that basic error:

"It does not really need the outlawed JVP to remind the Sinhalese people that the Parliament which is legislating to establish the provincial councils and the enforced merger of the two "Tamil" provinces received its mandate as long ago as in 1977; Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike is repeatedly telling them so, and she is hardly to be dismissed as "anti-Indian".

It is against this background that India's readiness to sign the draft Defence Treaty — and marked lack of enthusiasm to do so — should be seen. It does not want a 'Treaty' to supercede the Accord. Sri Lankan politicians and pundits say that the 'annexure' has no standing under international law. 'A scrap of paper' said one. Indian legal experts disagree. However Mr. Gandhi was not prepared to retreat an inch on the substance of the annexure.

Sri Lanka, having signed it, while Colombo was a beseiged city ringed by marching mobs and by fires, with Indian Commandos in frigates alongside Galle Face green, wants to introduce 'reciprocity or 'mutuality'. In doing so, it can dilute its negative impact on Sinhalese opinion. The F. E. E. R. Colombo correspondent writes:

"Colombo was anxious to sign with New Delhi a treaty of friendship and cooperation modelled on the Indo-Soviet treaty which would include reciprocal obligations. The intention, from Jayewardene's point of view was to get rid of what many Sri Lankans perceive to be inequities in the July accord, Although the Indian External Affairs Ministry has been cool on the idea of a treaty, Gandhi himself has said that he had no reservations about signing such an agreement with Sri Lanka.

At the conclusion of the visit Jayewardene told reporters that the draft submitted by Colombo will be discussed at length during the coming months and the next round of treaty talks would be held before the elections for the Sri Lankan provincial councils. Having the treaty signed before parliamectary elections, which most observers believe would precede the presidential election, would be a useful campaign plank for Jayewardene."

What the correspomdent calls "inequities" was more accurately described by highly placed and knowledgeable Sri Lankan as "structural flaws" or "imbalances" in the annexure. It was its one-sidedness that made the "annexure" appear such an obvious imposition, and an abridgment if not surrender of sovereignty — that anyway was the Opposition line, and the SLFP, with foreign policy as its propagandist ace at the next polls would have played that card to a maximum effect, President JR's move was intended to pre-empt SLFP attack on that front, and gain positive advantage by telling the Sinhala electorate that India has signed a treaty which closes the door finally to Tamilnadu military support for Sri Lankan Tamil rebels.

Again on the purely domestic issue — the situation on the ground — he has pushed India this time more effectively, to pledge peaceful conditions in north-and-east and a meaningful provincial polls. Such a situation would leave President JR with the following advantages vis-a-vis his own national constituency which he must sooner or later face. (a) the "Tigers" have been tamed, with manageable "residual. terrorism" as the only problem left (b) the IPKF can leave or at least follow the polls with a thinning out of forces. A reduction in force-levels, a less "high profile" Indian military presence, now a major irritant will certainly allow him to tell the Sinhalese electorate — I have got the Indians to tame or pull out the LTTE's claws, and restored a semblance of democracy in the north-and-east. When the referendum is held let the East decide.

By getting the IPKF to re-locate its camps in Ampara and the Sri Lankan forces to take tactical control of "designated areas in Trinco district — while the IPKF retains strategic control — he can ease Sinhala-cum-Muslim passions, give the S.L. army a marginal role with a promise of a greater, role later, and allow the return of Sinhala

New Saturday Review

and Muslim refugees in a climate of "security".

While President JR is concentrating on winning back lost ground externally (the "annexure", the foreign policy concessions) and the ground that he has lost to the SLFP-led anti-government forces. Mr Gandhi is suddenly confronted with uncertainly in the key area of his national constituency, (Tamiluadu) and criticism in another less clearly demarcated area of the same constituency — the Indian press, crucial element in the broad consensual support he had initially received for his Accord and his military involvement.

Nikhil Chakavarthy observed:

"The move to have a treaty with President Jayewardene should await such a review of the entire policy towards Sri Lakna. The Prime Minister would be wise to take the nation into confidence instead of putting his trust in President Jayewardene . . . Is the Rajvi Gandhi government prepared to go in for such commitment since this is also possible under the July 29 accord? Have we worked out the implications of such a situation in which India might annoy other political forces in Sri Lanka, while trying to pull President JRJ's chestnuts out of the fire ? "

The *Statesman* editorial concluded: "Unless of course, the Prime Minister is deluded enough to believe that the IPKF should again bail out the beleaguered Sri Lanka President, this time by going to the assistance of his troops fighting the JVP."

Extremely interesting in this connection is remark of an Indian official quoted by Anita Pratap in *India Today*. The correspondent writes "The key question, however, is what happens to the accord in the context of a change of guard, particularly in view of the anti-accord stand of the SLFP and Jayewardene's own possible successors? As an Indian official put it: "If the SLFP comes to power, we'll do business with them. Jayewardene is a natural ally because he is the signatory, but the events of the last four years cannot cloud the fact that India has traditionally had close ties with the SLFP. "In characteristic opposition bravura, Anura Bandaranaike declared publicly: "If we come to power, we will send the IPKF packing in 24 hours. "He later admitted that total withdrawal of the IPKF may not be possible but that the SLFP would definitely strive to reduce its number."

The assumption that "Accord", hailed by Washington and Moscow, conferred India a "regional superpower" status has tempted Indian analysts into tenuous Vietnam and Afghanistan parallels. To the extent that Delhi misread the nature ond complexity of the challenge and overestimated military power, the analogy holds. "Quagmire" and "Imbroglio" too can pass. But no further.

The "Tigers" (LTTE) are neither the Vietcong nor the Mujahdeen. Once military links with Tamilnadu, the southern Indian state, were cut, the LTTE has no steady supply source or rear-base.

What are India's choices? An Aquino aption is out, on the face of it. The Opposition leader, Mrs. Bandaranaike's son threatens to order Indian troops out in "24 hours" if his party assumes office. It is as if Mrs. Aquino had threatened to do the same with the U. S. bases. A more realistic Mrs. Bandaranaike now spoke of "re-negotiating" the Accord. A dutiful son has amended 'withdraw' to 'phased withdrawal'.

The region's superpower and the world's biggest democracy is learning its first chastening lesson on the limits of power. It may not have its Vietnam. Perhaps a Sri Lanka syndrome.

This peculiarly American dilemma is sure to have been of absorbing interest to the many distinguished American visitors to Colombo recently, including former Ambassadors, well known scholar Howard Wriggins and Mr. Robert Peck, of the state department and Mr. Peter Galbraith, senior adviser to the all important Senate Foreign Relations Committee. 15.2.88.

A North-East Diary **COMMENT**

'IPKF Welcomes You to Jaffna'

The IPKF is distributing a questionnaire in the North to find out what the people think about the IPKF and its activities.

Among the questions, all requiring 'yes' or 'no' answers, are: "Do you want the IPKF to quit?" and "Do you think the IPKF has behaved well or badly?"

Meanwhile the IPKF has put up billboards in Jaffna Town which proclaim: 'The IPKF Welcomes You to Jaffna'.

Well, well. Reminds one of that story about the Arab, his camel and his tent!

India's High Commissioner J.N. Dixit told local newspapermen that the Indian Peace Keeping Force, during its recent military operation in Batticaloa, had kept in mind the lessons it had learnt in Jaffna during Operation Pawan in October '87.

What a pity Mr. Dixit wasn't a little more forthcoming and told us what lessons the Jawans (and he himself?) learnt in the North.

The IPKF High Command had in the latter part of October '87 summoned a meeting of refugees at a camp in a Jaffna suburb.

A young man, University educated, had come forward and related how his house had been looted. The next day an IPKF jeep arrived at the camp. The previous day's complainant was blindfolded and taken away. His wife, who watched helplessly, feared she would never see her husband again. But after a few days the young man was brought back to the camp – but minus his wedding ring, wrist watch and some cash. As a bonus, he told his wife, he'd been given a few blows. He also reported that he had not been given any food and had seen at least 20 people, some of them in their 50's or 60's, being given the 'works' by the Jawans.

The young couple are seriously thinking of migrating.

A top medico in the North who is a keen music lover received a rude shock recently. He had just returned to his home after nearly a month at a refugee camp.

The morning after his return, he found IPKF personnel surrounding his house, and he was asked to put his hands up. When he tried to introduce himself, the rifles got shoved even closer to his chest, so he decided it was wiser to shut up.

The raiding party went upstairs and returned with an Identity Card. Once the medico's identity was established, the embarrassed Captain explained that they had received information that the house was a 'Tiger' base and they were ordered to blast it.

The Jawans left after a one-and-a-half-hour search, taking with them the medico's precious pre-recorded music cassettes which he had bought while abroad. Also missing were sundry other things, but what he's really sad about is the theft of his music tapes.

Leading the fast are the DMK president, Mr. M. Karunanidhi (centre) and to his right, Mr. Anbhazhagan and Mr. Arcot Veeraswami and to the left of Mr. Karunanidhi are Mr. K. Manoharan and Mr. Arangannal, (below) a section of the participants at the fast.

Fast by DMK on Lanka Tamils' issue

MADRAS, Feb. 20.

The Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam today organised a day-long fast all over Tamil Nadu to protest against what it called the Government of India's "military action" in the Tamil areas of Sri Lanka.

The fast was also undertaken to condemn the Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi's "callous attitude" towards the issue and to deplore the Union Government's failure to heed the repeated pleas of the DMK to stop the military action in Sri Lanka and create an atmosphere conducive for talks.

In Madras, the DMK president, Mr. M. Karunanidhi, led the fast at Marina.

Madurai: Hundreds of DMK members observed the fast near Thevar statue at Goripalayam here today.

Mr. Kaveri Maniam, Madurai urban district DMK secretary, and Mr. Pon. Muthuramalingam were among others who participated in the fast.

Reports have come in of similar fasts at Sivakasi, Tiruthangal, Sattur, in Kamarajar district.

Thanjavur: Over 1,000 DMK volunteers headed by Mr. Sultan Mohideen, vice-chairman Thanjavur municipality, observed a fast in front of the municipal bus stand. The fast took place in 40 other centres in the district.

Erode: The DMK members observed the fast here and 38 other places in the Periyar district. At Erode Mr. S. Arangaraja, town DMK secretary, participated in the fast before the head post office. Mr. A. Ganesamurthi, district secretary, Mr. N. K. K. Periasamy, Mrs. Subbulakshmi Jagadeesan, former Minister, took part in the fast in different places in the district.

Cuddalore: Over 3,000 members of the DMK observed the fast at about 40 centres in South Arcot. At Cuddalore Mr. V. Krishnamoorthy, ex-MLA, led the fast. In Neyveli Mr. S. Kuppusamy, State secretary of the DMK-led trade union presided. At Vridhachalam, Villupuram, Panruti, Tindivanam and Chidambaram the fast was observed.

VELLORE: Thousands of DMK members observed a token fast in 62 centres in North Arcot District. In Vellore, about 200 members including Mr. V. M. Devaraj, Chairman of the Vellore Municipality, observed the fast.

TIRUCHI: Over 8,000 members of the DMK in 52 centres all over Tiruchi district participated in the fast. In Tiruchi town Mr. Anbil Dharmalingam led the fast.

The DMK president, Mr. M. Karunanidhi, today said his party would fight to the last for the cause of the Sri Lankan Tamils and charged the Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, with standing on his "ego" despite the LTTE leader, Mr. V. Prabhakaran's announcement that he was prepared for talks with the Government of India.

At the end of his party's fast on the Marina, he said the fast was not to demonstrate the strength of the DMK but to show the feelings and anguish of the people of the Tamil Nadu to Mr. Rajiv Gandhi on what was happening in the Tamil areas of Sri Lanka.

From October 10, 1987, the Indian Army, which was sent to Sri Lanka to guard peace, was "annihilating" the Tamils and the Indian Peace-Keeping Force was doing it at the behest of Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, who received "instructions" from the Sri Lankan President, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, the DMK President alleged.

The DMK was prepared to fight for the cause of the Sri Lankan Tamils till the last, he said.

He alleged that more than "a thousand" Indian soldiers had been killed in Sri Lanka and that Mr. Gandhi was responsible for this. Mr. Karunanidhi said his "open allegation" was that the death of Indian soldiers was "an unnecessary event," and that this was "anti-national".

An agreement to resolve the Tamils' issue should have been signed between the Tamils and the Sri Lankan Government and not between the Government of India and Sri Lanka.

The "handmaids" of the Government of India viz. All-India Radio and Doordarshan were being used for propaganda that the IPKF was keeping peace in the Tamil areas in Sri Lanka, he said.

INDIAN EXPRESS

COMMENT

Defence debate

Lt-Gen. S.K. Sinha, PVSM (Retd)

Wrong war, wrong place

The course of events in Sri Lanka has been topsy turvy. The peace accord has resulted in large-scale death, destruction and despair. We sent our troops to the island to protect the Tamils and have ended up fighting the Tamil Tigers. We now have 70,000 troops in Sri Lanka fighting a bleeding war on which we are spending Rs. four crore a day. The rationale behind our military involvement in Sri Lanka is difficult to understand. Initially we flexed our military muscle by violating Sri Lankan air space and dropped 25 tons of relief stores, half of which must have fallen in the lagoons and the jungles. Thus this mercy mission providing a mere 12 tons of relief stores for 200,000 beleagured people, hardly provided any succour. It greatly hurt Sinhalese national pride. Thereafter, as an image building and vote catching exercise, we rushed into an accord, which was almost a copybook repetition of the ill-fated Punjab accord. Notwithstanding the fact that our jawans have been fighting with exemplary gallantry and devotion, it is difficult for them to retrieve a situation arising out of a basically flawed accord. They have thus got engaged in fighting a wrong war at the wrong place and at the wrong time.

Imaginary threats

While talking to the students at Shantiniketan recently, the Prime Minister justified our military presence in Sri Lanka on the plea that Sri Lanka, otherwise, would have become a base for forces unfriendly to India, and that would have posed a threat to our southern borders. When one compares the justifications concerning Nicaragua, Afghanistan and Sri Lanka, one discerns a remarkable similarity. All of them are based on imaginary threats. The so-called threat we faced from Sri Lanka needs to be discussed in detail. Being about 50 times smaller than India in population, size and military strength, Sri Lanka by itself is in no position to pose any threat to us. The superpowers can pose a threat even without any base in Sri Lanka, but in the present international scenario, that threat materialising is a very remote possibility. China is most unlikely to venture on such a long-distance operation which may be beyond its capability. Pakistan will not forget in a hurry the lesson of geography she learnt in 1971. Had Pakistan sent her forces to Sri Lanka, that would have provided us an excellent opportunity to beef up the LTTE and embroil it in a long bleeding war on the island. That would have seriously weakened her on the main front in the north. Almost as an afterthought it is now being argued that if our forces had not gone to Sri Lanka, foreign elements inimical to us would have got a foothold there. This gets ruled out by a statement President Jayewardene made at about the time when the accord was concluded. He declared that he had first tried to get help from the US and when this was not forthcoming, he had asked UK, Pakistan and China. But they too did not respond positively. It was only then that he turned to India for help because India is "the dominant power in the region" and is friendly to Sri Lanka.

The army chief has asked us to see these operations "in the correct overall perspective of India's security compulsions." Indeed we must do so. There is likely to be an accretion in Pakistan's deployable strength against us. With the Soviet military withdrawal from Afghanistan, two to three Pakistani divisions earmarked for the Pak-Afghan border would get released from employment on the Indo-Pak border. Some 10,000 Pakistani troops now in Saudi Arabia are returning home by March 1988. Thus there may be a 70,000 increase in Pakistani strength against us while our strength has got depleted by 70,000 due to the Sri Lankan involvement. The other argument put forward by the army chief, "If you do not help extinguish fire in your neighbour's house, it will spread to yours," is not very convincing. There is a large expanse of water between the neighbour and us. Moreover, one does not go to extinguish a fire in a neighbour's house and then get involved in fighting him.

Vietnam situation

The LTTE chose to present an identifiable target at Jaffna and our forces smashed their resistance in a difficult street fighting operation, compounded by the former using the civilian population, as a human shield. Now we are engaged in fighting an insurgency. The LTTE may establish a link with the Sinhalese extremists, the JVP, and insurgency may spread from the northern and eastern provinces to other parts of Sri Lanka. With opposition mounting to the octogenarian President and to the accord in his own ruling party, besides the opposition parties and the extremists, and he being the mainstay of the accord in Sri Lanka, we have all the makings of a Vietnam situation on our hands. Insurgency is always a long-drawn-out affair, sucking in more and more troops. It lasted more than 30 years in Vietnam. We ourselves have been engaged in tackling it for more than 30 years in Nagaland. The IPKF started initially as a 8,000-strong force last year, and now its strength has risen to 70,000. The situation has built up for our getting embroiled in Sri Lanka for a long time.

The political fall-out from our involvement in Sri Lanka can also be counter productive. Our forces in Sri Lanka despite all the excellent work done by them, are getting isolated. The Prime Minister of Sri Lanka and his minister for internal security have not hesitated to castigate the IPKF in the Sri Lankan Parliament. The opposition parties and the extremists have continued their tirade. Even within our country, there has been growing disenchantment in Tamil Nadu. This may be exploited in the coming state elections. No amount of political gimmickry and devaluation of the nation's highest award, the Bharat Ratna, will prevent this. The door for political negotiations with the LTTE appears to have been closed. The Prime Minister and the Defence Minister have been repeatedly asserting that there can be no talks till they have surrendered all their weapons or we have recovered them all. This is reminiscent of the stand taken by the allies towards the end of the second World War about no talks with Germany, unless it surrendered unconditionally. In the event, the western allies found a political map drawn in Europe after the war in a manner adverse to their interests. Further, after we succeed in totally disarming the LTTE, what is the guarantee that on our withdrawal from Sri Lanka, and possibly in a post-Jayewardene era, the Tamils on the island will be treated fairly particularly when their ability to offer resistance would have been neutralised.

26.2.88

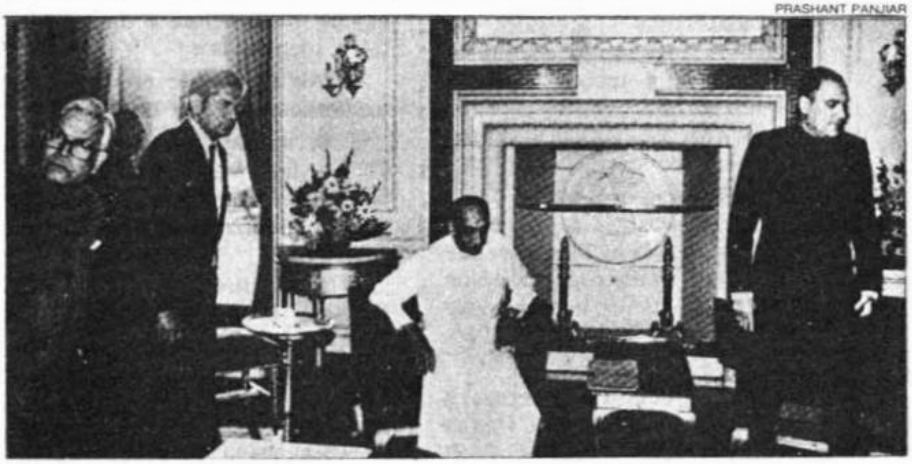
REPORT

Running out of Time

Delhi talks focus on a new treaty

IN his latest book, *Windows on India*, Sri Lankan political scientist Ralph Buultjens, a close friend of the late Indira Gandhi, concludes that "India and Sri Lanka are like a husband and wife who can marry or divorce but can never separate." The allegory could not be more apt. With the initial, stormy ardour of their regional matrimony last July having cooled considerably, the pressure is now on for a re-examination of the nuptial contract.

PRASHANT PANJIAR



(From right) Gandhi, Jayewardene, Athulathmudali and Natwar Singh

Sri Lankan President Junius Jayewardene, during the latest round of official talks between the two countries recently, made it abundantly clear that with the July accord under domestic attack, Colombo wants a long-term friendship treaty with New Delhi to salvage prestige at home and counter the charges of a "sell-out".

The timing is crucial: 1988 is going to be an election year in Sri Lanka. Colombo has announced that the all-important Provincial Council elections will take place in March or April. This will be followed by general elections—the first in 10 years—and presidential elections. Jayewardene, under intense pressure from his nervous ruling United National Party colleagues, is thus running out of time in his attempt to convince the electorate that the accord will ultimately bring peace to the troubled island.

For New Delhi, the treaty twist has posed some delicate diplomatic problems though Colombo's desire for additional dowry has been obvious for some time. South Block's official stand has to be seen as one of total support for Jayewardene. But having burnt its fingers somewhat, the Indian Government wants to take its time before entering into a broader and more binding agreement. "We have no objection in principle to the signing of a treaty," says a senior External Affairs Ministry official. "What we are concerned with is that it does not dilute the provisions of the July accord."

That concern is understandable. It is essentially the fine print in the original accord that has forced Colombo to now go in for a friendship treaty with India. The anti-accord forces in Sri Lanka have been harping on the lack of "reciprocity" in the exchange of letters between Rajiv Gandhi and Jayewardene last July which form the annexure to the accord. The key phrase is in Rajiv's letter which reads: "Trincomalee or other ports in Sri Lanka will not be made available for military use by any country in a manner prejudicial to India's interests...." Domestic Sinhalese opinion feels that New Delhi should make an equivalent commitment in return.

South Block's strategy is to stall the treaty discussions till after the crucial Provincial Council elections—a make-or-break issue as far as the accord is concerned. In fact, the success or failure of the elections is more dependent on India than it is on Sri Lanka. The decision to push it through is yet another gamble that rests on whether conditions in the northern and eastern provinces will be conducive to the conduct of a poll.

To ensure that, New Delhi has launched a two-pronged offensive. By the end of the fortnight, the IPKF strength in Sri Lanka is expected to be around 60,000 troops. One additional brigade (over 3,000 men) moved into the eastern province just before Jayewardene arrived in New Delhi. Another is scheduled to be flown into the province—where the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) have regrouped and caused considerable insecurity. Once the troops are in place and have been properly briefed, New Delhi hopes to launch a combing operation that will "secure" the province in time for the elections.

At the same time, India's overworked High Commissioner in Colombo, J.N. Dixit, has flown into Jaffna and Batticaloa where he has had discussions with local citizens' committees and prominent people to convince them to participate in the election process.

Of the two, Dixit's is the trickier mission. If the LTTE boycotts the elections, its validity will be in question. Similarly, if the Tigers lie low for now and strike when the elections are on, they still have the capacity to render it inoperable. The Tigers also have the capacity to threaten prospective candidates and prevent them from taking part in the process.

To counter that, New Delhi has used the recent talks to convince Jayewardene that a few additional concessions to the Tamils, in the devolution package agreed upon under the accord, will go a long way to swing Tamil opinion solidly for elections. The Sri Lankans have agreed to look into the matter without making it seem that the Jayewardene Government is giving in to Tamil—or Indian—demands.

There are also feelers being sent to the LTTE for some sort of compromise whereby the LTTE will be given political control of the northern province on the condition that it abandons its claims to the eastern province. Having lost its northern stronghold to the IPKF and under increasing pressure in the east, the LTTE just might be agreeable to the conditions—or so New Delhi and Colombo are hoping. The problem is whether Tigers can change their stripes.

FEBRUARY 29, 1988 —DILIP BOBB

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தமிழீழத் தாயகம்

READ

PART 3